

**General Douglas MacArthur**  
**Military Leadership Writing Competition**  
**Command and General Staff College**  
**2012**



**Award Winning Essays**



**Combat Studies Institute Press**  
**US Army Combined Arms Center**  
**Fort Leavenworth, Kansas**

Report Documentation Page			Form Approved OMB No. 0704-0188		
Public reporting burden for the collection of information is estimated to average 1 hour per response, including the time for reviewing instructions, searching existing data sources, gathering and maintaining the data needed, and completing and reviewing the collection of information. Send comments regarding this burden estimate or any other aspect of this collection of information, including suggestions for reducing this burden, to Washington Headquarters Services, Directorate for Information Operations and Reports, 1215 Jefferson Davis Highway, Suite 1204, Arlington VA 22202-4302. Respondents should be aware that notwithstanding any other provision of law, no person shall be subject to a penalty for failing to comply with a collection of information if it does not display a currently valid OMB control number.					
1. REPORT DATE <b>2013</b>		2. REPORT TYPE		3. DATES COVERED <b>00-00-2013 to 00-00-2013</b>	
4. TITLE AND SUBTITLE <b>General Douglas MacArthur Military Leadership Writing Competition Command and General Staff College 2012 Award Winning Essays</b>			5a. CONTRACT NUMBER		
			5b. GRANT NUMBER		
			5c. PROGRAM ELEMENT NUMBER		
6. AUTHOR(S)			5d. PROJECT NUMBER		
			5e. TASK NUMBER		
			5f. WORK UNIT NUMBER		
7. PERFORMING ORGANIZATION NAME(S) AND ADDRESS(ES) <b>US Army Combined Arms Center, Combat Studies Institute, Fort Leavenworth, KS, 66027</b>			8. PERFORMING ORGANIZATION REPORT NUMBER		
9. SPONSORING/MONITORING AGENCY NAME(S) AND ADDRESS(ES)			10. SPONSOR/MONITOR'S ACRONYM(S)		
			11. SPONSOR/MONITOR'S REPORT NUMBER(S)		
12. DISTRIBUTION/AVAILABILITY STATEMENT <b>Approved for public release; distribution unlimited</b>					
13. SUPPLEMENTARY NOTES					
14. ABSTRACT					
15. SUBJECT TERMS					
16. SECURITY CLASSIFICATION OF:			17. LIMITATION OF ABSTRACT <b>Same as Report (SAR)</b>	18. NUMBER OF PAGES <b>74</b>	19a. NAME OF RESPONSIBLE PERSON
a. REPORT <b>unclassified</b>	b. ABSTRACT <b>unclassified</b>	c. THIS PAGE <b>unclassified</b>			

Cover Photograph Brigadier General Courtney Whitney; General Douglas MacArthur, Commander in Chief of U.N. Forces; and Major General Edward Almond, observe the shelling of Inchon from the U.S.S. Mt. McKinley, September 15, 1950., ca. 1900 - 1982

ARC Identifier 531373 / Local Identifier 111-SC-348438

Item from Record Group 111: Records of the Office of the Chief Signal Officer.

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## Library of Congress Cataloging-in-Publication Data

General Douglas MacArthur Military Leadership Writing Competition,  
Command and General Staff College 2012 award winning essays / U.S.  
Army Combined Arms Center.

pages cm

Includes bibliographical references and index

ISBN 978-0-9885837-4-0 (alk. paper)

1. Leadership--United States. 2. Soldiers' writings, American. I. Combat  
Studies Institute (U.S.) II. U.S. Army Combined Arms Center.

UB210.G4423 2013

355.3'3041--dc23

2013001741

First printing 2013



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<http://usacac.army.mil/CAC2/CSI/index.asp>

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Editor  
C. Fischer

## **Foreword**

During each session of the Intermediate Level Education Course, the Command and General Staff College holds the General Douglas MacArthur Military Leadership Writing Competition. Students author and submit papers on various leadership topics. Winning papers are selected by a panel of judges and are evaluated on originality, scholarship, writing style and value to the profession.

As part of our mission to promote scholarship and add to the professional discourse, the Combat Studies Institute is pleased to publish this selection of award winning papers written by students from the Command and General Staff College classes 12-01 and 12-02 for the Academic Year 2012 General Douglas MacArthur Military Leadership Writing Competition.

Roderick M. Cox  
Colonel, US Army  
Director, Combat Studies Institute



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## **Empirically-Based Leadership**

### **Integrating the Science of Psychology in Building a Better Leadership Model \***

Major Sean McDonald

#### **Introduction**

There are very few tasks in the Army more important than developing effective, competent leaders. As a significant part of this effort, the Army provides Field Manual (FM) 6-22, which establishes leadership doctrine and fundamental principles to guide leaders at all levels. In support of this important objective, the manual offers a comprehensive framework for leadership that explicitly outlines the highly valued characteristics and competencies all leaders are expected to aspire and emulate. However, as valuable as this framework may be, much of its content is based upon intuition and experience. As expressed in FM 6-22, the manual “combines the lessons of the past with important insights” in establishing a model for competent leadership.<sup>1</sup>

While this approach to framing leadership has value, it can also be a significant limitation that potentially overlooks other highly influential factors to producing successful leadership and positive organizational outcomes. Similar to flaws in relying exclusively on anecdotal evidence, there may be important factors identified within the empirical literature absent or lacking emphasis in FM 6-22. Further, certain characteristics or competencies may be more important than others depending on the context or leadership position. These limitations suggest a review of relevant research is necessary to enhancing the Army’s current model of leadership.

With this in mind, the intent of this paper is to identify those empirically based factors most important to a model of influential, competent leadership. To obtain this end state, three essential areas require further exploration. First, relevant research on key individual characteristics or traits of effective leadership will be examined and compared to those characteristics established within FM 6-22. Next, contemporary research on leadership psychology has placed greater emphasis on social context over individual traits in determining effective leadership. On this basis,

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\* Empirically-Based Leadership: Integrating the Science of Psychology in Building a Better Leadership Model by Major Sean McDonald appears in the January-February 2013 issue of *Military Review*. This paper is the first place winner of the General Douglas MacArthur Military Leadership Writing Competition at the Command and General Staff College of Fort Leavenworth, Kansas for class 12-01.

the empirical literature on contextual factors will be examined. Finally, in light of this analysis, possible improvements to the Army's current model of leadership will be discussed as part of the broader effort to cultivate a better understanding of highly competent leadership. While experience and intuition are valuable sources of information, integrating relevant empiricism into the process is necessary to constructing a more complete model of leadership best designed to develop highly competent leaders.

### **Individual Characteristics of Effective Leadership**

The possession of certain individual characteristics is a critical element of the Army's leadership model as expressed in the simple phrase, "what leaders DO emerges from who they are (BE) and what they KNOW."<sup>2</sup> According to this conceptual framework, particular attributes along with appropriate knowledge serve as the foundation from which desired competencies emerge. In other words, certain characteristics are an essential aspect to being an effective leader, and in their absence, desirable competencies will not fully develop. While the identification of necessary attributes is valuable in structuring and communicating the expectations for leadership, what remains unclear is the validity of the inclusion or exclusion of particular characteristics beyond the basis of intuition and experience.

FM 6-22 identifies 12 individual characteristics as being necessary to competent leadership, which are organized into three categories: character, presence, and intellectual capacity. Analyzing all 12 characteristics is beyond the scope of this paper, so the discussion in this section will primarily focus on the key areas of interest within the empirical literature on leadership characteristics or traits. The first major area to be examined involves ethical or moral reasoning, which most closely aligns with the category of character defined by FM 6-22 as "a person's moral and ethical qualities, helps determine what is right and gives a leader motivation to do what is appropriate..."<sup>3</sup> Based upon this definition, there is little doubt that ethical reasoning is a critically important area within the Army's model of leadership. The consequences both good and bad of moral reasoning within leaders carry far greater weight than those of followers, especially in the context of life and death situations.<sup>4</sup> But what is less known or understood is the impact of ethical and moral reasoning on leadership performance, which is generally assessed by the attainment of goals or objectives within a leadership context.<sup>5</sup> Atwater, Dionne, Camobreco, Avolio, and Lau (1998) examined the relationship between the moral reasoning of US military cadets and their development and effectiveness as leaders as ranked by both their peers and supervisors. Not surprisingly, these researchers found that higher levels of moral reasoning were related to leader effectiveness in obtaining established objectives,<sup>6</sup> which subsequent studies have supported.<sup>7</sup>

In examining this relationship in a slightly different light, Turner, Barling, and Epitropaki (2002) postulated that leaders with higher moral reasoning would be perceived as more transformational than leaders who exhibited lower moral reasoning. Transformational leadership is defined as a style of leadership that inspires followers to look beyond self-interests for the good of the group as opposed to transactional leadership that motivates followers through corrective transactions, which is based more on reward and punishment. These researchers developed their hypothesis from moral development theory which asserts that leaders with more complex moral reasoning will be able to utilize greater sophisticated conceptualizations of interpersonal situations, are more likely to think about problems in different ways, and are cognizant of a larger number of behavioral options. Consequently, leaders with more complex moral reasoning are more likely to value goals that go beyond immediate self-interest and to foresee the benefits of actions that serve the collective good (i.e., transformational leadership). The outcome of the study found a significant relationship between higher moral development and transformational leadership.<sup>8</sup>

While the collective outcome of these studies is not particularly surprising, an understanding of the professional literature in this category remains an important element in developing a model for leadership. To some, such an analysis would seem to be a pointless endeavor considering the obvious need for sound ethical and moral decision-making, especially for the military leader who is frequently confronted with highly complex, “gray” situations. However, the science on the topic not only refines our understanding of the role of ethics within leadership, but more importantly, these studies provide critical insight on the need for ethical and moral development among leaders in order to obtain the greatest outcomes related to leader performance.

Another significant area of interest within the empirical literature is emotional intelligence, which in recent years has been the focus of considerable attention in relationship to leadership efficacy. Emotional intelligence (EI) involves an awareness of one’s own emotions as well as the ability to control them, social awareness of others and their emotions, and the capacity to understand and manage relationships and social networks.<sup>9</sup> Based on this description, EI is relevant to all three categories of Army leader attributes, especially the attributes of empathy and interpersonal tact. In discussing empathy, FM 6-22 defines it as “the ability to see something from another person’s point of view, to identify with and enter into another person’s feelings and emotions.”<sup>10</sup> Empathy is not typically a quality that most soldiers would readily identify as an essential characteristic to effective leadership or necessary to producing positive organizational outcomes. Further, FM 6-22 tends to reflect this perception given the manual devotes only four paragraphs to discussing the attribute. However, the research in this area suggests it is an important quality to competent leadership especially as it relates to EI.

Based upon the description of EI, empathy is a critical element of emotional intelligence. In examining this characteristic, one study analyzed the relationship between EI and leadership effectiveness among US Navy human resource officers.<sup>11</sup> The researchers administered a measure of EI, which provided four subscales: perceiving emotions, facilitating thought, understanding emotions (both in self and others), and ability to manage emotions. The researchers then compared scores to managerial performance. Results from the study revealed a positive and significant correlation between the officers overall emotional intelligence and effectiveness as a leader. More specifically, when analyzing the subscales, the researchers detected significant relationship on facilitating thought, understanding emotions, and ability to manage emotions to leadership effectiveness. In understanding others emotions, an important contributing factor to the success of the more effective officers was their ability to empathize with their subordinates.<sup>12</sup>

In another study, researchers conducted a meta-analysis to ascertain if a consistent, research-based link could be established between EI and effective leadership. A meta-analysis is a particularly powerful study because it statistically analyzes the outcomes of a large collection of research results for the purpose of integrating the findings versus relying upon the results of a single study. Based upon the analysis of 48 studies examining this relationship, results of the meta-analysis suggested a strong relationship between EI and leadership effectiveness.<sup>13</sup> While there have been some studies that have minimized this relationship, the empirical data strongly supports the inclusion of EI characteristics within a model of leadership best designed to produce competent leaders.

A third area of considerable interest in the empirical literature is the trait of hardiness or resiliency and it's relationship to leadership effectiveness. As part of the Army's model of leadership, the characteristic of resiliency is listed as one of the 12 attributes of a competent leader. FM 6-22 describes the resilient leader as "recovers quickly from setbacks, shock, injuries, adversity, and stress while maintaining their mission and organizational focus. Their resilience rests on will, the inner drive that compels them to keep going, even when exhausted, hungry, afraid, cold, and wet. Resilience helps leaders and their organizations to carry difficult missions to their conclusion."<sup>14</sup> Unfortunately, FM 6-22's description of resiliency contained in four short paragraphs primarily revolves around its application to combat with little discussion on its relevancy to leadership within a broader context.<sup>15</sup>

Prior to discussing the research on resiliency or hardiness, it is important to discuss its conceptual framework. While FM 6-22 characterizes resiliency as a behavior, the professional literature generally considers it an element of personality that develops early in life and is relatively

stable over time, although amenable to change and trainable under certain conditions. Hardy or resilient persons have a high sense of life and work commitment, a greater feeling of control, and are more open to change and challenges in life. They tend to interpret stressful and painful experiences as a normal aspect of existence, part of life that is overall interesting and worthwhile.<sup>16</sup> Although there is some consistency with the description provided by FM 6-22, the important difference is that it contains a broader application extending well beyond a particular context (e.g. combat). With this understanding established, the research on the topic can now be more intelligently examined.

An extensive body of research has accumulated demonstrating that resiliency and hardiness acts as considerable protective factor against stress while increasing performance. In one study, researchers examined personality factors, psychological hardiness, and social judgment (an element of EI) as predictors of leader performance. The researchers analyzed data collected over four years on West Point cadets and graduates. Although they analyzed a number of different factors relevant to leadership performance, hardiness emerged as the strongest predictor of performance in variety of contexts over more commonly associated qualities like mental abilities or emotional intelligence.<sup>17</sup> Similar results have been obtained in others studies with a variety of occupational groups. In addition to moderating against combat exposure in Gulf War soldiers, hardiness has emerged as a stress buffer in other populations such as US Army casualty assistance workers, peacekeeping soldiers, Israeli soldiers in combat training, officer candidates, and members of the Special Forces.<sup>18</sup> This data strongly supports the inclusion of resiliency or hardiness as a necessary element of competent leadership.

The final characteristic to be reviewed is intellectual capacity, which has been a longstanding area of interest in relation to job performance. FM 6-22 makes a similar connection between intellect and performance in its definition of intellectual capacity, “mental resources or tendencies that shape a leaders’ conceptual abilities and *impact effectiveness*.”<sup>19</sup> The interest in this relationship intuitively makes sense: as leaders gain responsibility, they generally experience greater demands in the complexity of problems therefore requiring greater intellectual capacity. However, while there is validity to competent leaders possessing higher intellect, recent studies suggest that the impact of intelligence to improved performance as a leader is generally moderated by other factors not directly related to intelligence. In other words, even though intelligence is important to leadership, it makes little difference in isolation unless a leader is able to effectively complement their intellectual capacity with other important characteristics.<sup>20</sup>

For example, the quality of resiliency is an extremely important moderator in the pragmatic manifestation of intelligence within a leadership role. In a review of professional literature, Fiedler and Gibson (2010) found that intellectual ability contributed little to performance among leaders who possessed poorer stress tolerance (i.e. low hardiness) while subjected to greater levels of situational stress. Conversely, for participants who possessed higher resiliency, greater intellectual ability tended to have a meaningful impact on leadership performance, especially as responsibilities increased.<sup>21</sup> One possible explanation for this dynamic is that increased anxiety or stress places greater strain on an individual's ability to concentrate on more complex tasks as commonly required in leadership positions of greater responsibility. Therefore, individuals who possess higher resiliency are better equipped to moderate the effects of stress, allowing for greater commitment of their intellectual resources to their job demands.

Another important factor in the manifestation of intellect in relation to leadership performance is EI. Similar to resiliency, general intelligence has little impact on a leader's performance unless he or she possesses some of the social and interpersonal skills necessary in motivating and directing a group to a common objective. Bartone, Eid, and Snook (2009) study found that leader performance was best predicted by a combination of intellectual abilities, hardiness, and social judgment (EI) versus intellectual abilities alone. This empirical data suggests that while intellectual capacity is an important attribute in a model of leadership, it must be complemented by other factors in order to make a meaningful contribution to overall performance.

### **Contextual Factors to Effective Leadership**

As seen in the discussion up to this point, much of the past research on leadership has primarily centered on the individual traits, abilities, or characteristics of effective leaders. FM 6-22 is no different with its primary focus on the individual characteristics and behaviors an Army leader is expected to demonstrate in order to be most effective. However, more recent research indicates this preoccupation on the individual leader is missing a powerful contributor to effective leadership: social contextual factors. This substantive area of empirical interest strongly suggests that leadership is not simply possessing a set of certain qualities alone but rather of the relationship between leaders and followers that matters most in regards to leader efficacy.<sup>22</sup> Although individual traits and competencies should not be ignored in establishing a model for leadership, failure to understand and integrate the social context of leadership into a model is omitting a critical aspect of the formula used to calculate competent leadership.



In conducting extensive research on this issue, Haslam, Reicher, and Platow (2011) determined that context played a more significant role than individual traits as emphasized by more traditional views on leadership efficacy. More specifically, they discovered three critical factors to effective, influential leadership. The first factor they identified is that leaders must be viewed by their followers as highly representative of their group. This point may seem patently obvious, but often leaders fail in this respect simply because they do not recognize or understand their group's identity and/or they fail to see the value in closely aligning themselves with the group they supposedly represent.<sup>23</sup>

In elaborating further, these researchers found that the more an individual is viewed by group members as “one of us,” the more influential he or she will be within the group and consequently, the more willing other group members will be to follow their direction. One of the most important areas of interest within the field of leadership is to understand why and how some people within a group become more influential than others. As seen in much of the past research, many researchers have sought to address this issue by identifying a set of specific qualities – attributes and behaviors like those in FM 6-22 – that aspiring leaders need to display in order to differentiate themselves from their followers. In contrast, Haslam, Reicher, and Platow's (2011) analysis suggests that prospective leaders' primary goal should not be to differentiate themselves from those they seek to lead, but seek to emphasize their commonalities.<sup>24</sup>

There are a broad range of studies that have demonstrated not only the most prototypical members (i.e. most embodying the characteristics) of a group are the most influential, but also that, given a choice, their fellow group members will often prefer leaders who display in-group prototypical characteristics ahead of those who display qualities that are stereotypical of leaders in general.<sup>25</sup> For example, in one study, researchers explored leader influence on separate groups whose members either perceived the leader as similar to them (“friendly,” “easy going,” and “tolerant”) or different (“intellectual,” “high achieving,” and “serious”). The researchers found that when group members perceived the leader as embodying the characteristics of the group, the leader was rated as more influential and charismatic, even though the leader lacked characteristics commonly associated with effective leaders (e.g. “high achieving,” “intellectual”). Researchers found this to be particularly true if those leaders appeared to demonstrate greater interest in the group, and framed their leadership in transformational rather than transactional terms.<sup>26</sup>

A second critical factor in effective leadership identified by Haslam, Reicher, and Platow (2011) is that leaders must be viewed by their followers as an “in-group champion” – an individual who exerts considerable effort for the greater good of the group. To engage followers in a powerful and



influential way, leaders' actions and visions must promote group interests consistent with the norms and values for that particular group. Similar to the last factor, this point may seem rather obvious, but again, many leaders fail to understand it and more importantly, apply it. According to the researchers, the key to this factor has less to do with a leader simply exerting great effort on behalf of his or her group, but exerting effort *within* the framework of the group's own norms and values.<sup>27</sup> To accomplish this objective, aspiring leaders must first understand their group's identity as well as the concept of social identity – a term that relates to an individual's self-concept derived from group membership distinct from other groups.<sup>28</sup>

To illustrate this factor, the Army is a large organization with its own set of well-established values and standards. While most of these values are explicit and standardized, there are many different units within the Army that possess their own unique group norms and values as well as distinct group identities from which members derive a significant aspect of their self-concept (i.e. social identity). For example, the 101st Airborne Division 3d Brigade "Rakkasans" possesses an identity distinct from other infantry units in the Army to include other brigades from the 101st Airborne Division. This unique group identity serves to communicate a positive distinctness from other groups, which consequently, serves to affirmatively shape the self-concepts of each soldier that is a member of the unit. Further, within the "Rakkasans," each battalion, company, platoon, and squad possess slightly different group identities from which soldiers further derive significance. While an infantry officer from another unit can be very successful within the "Rakkasans," his success as a leader is most likely predicated upon understanding the group's unique identity as well as the unique values and norms that govern it, not simply exerting great effort on behalf of the group.

Extending this point, research strongly suggests that leaders who are perceived by their followers in this respect glean a number of important benefits. In addition to receiving endorsements from their followers, they are likely to be viewed as charismatic, influential in the views of their followers, and much more capable of enlisting the efforts of their followers in bringing their visions for the group to fruition.<sup>29</sup> These are all important elements to being an effective leader, but their achievement is based upon a leader understanding the group's social identity and advocating consistently within the norms and values of the group.

Finally, Haslam, Reicher, and Platow (2011) identified that effective leaders actively construct an identity for their group that is translated into reality. Research in this area indicates effective leaders are not permanently bound to a group's identity where they simply operate within its boundaries, but they become masters of it. In support of this point, history has repeatedly demonstrated that the most effective leaders create

and shape their groups' identities, and consequently, those identities create and shape institutions, organizations, and entire societies. These leaders accomplish this in recognition of the fact that a group of people with a shared identity possesses much more power than people without it. Indeed, one of the central reasons why great leadership is so admired is that it gives evidence to the simple fact that history is not made by groups with the greatest resources or numbers, but by those groups whose energies have been galvanized by leaders into the most coherent social force. These leaders take the ideas, values, and priorities of the group and translate them into reality. In analyzing this factor, research has strongly suggested that group identity is the source of this coherence and transformation and therefore, for leaders, it is the most powerful of all leadership resources.<sup>30</sup>

In addition to empirical support, military history is filled with examples that demonstrate this factor in action. For instance, the British Commander, General William Slim, during World War II took over the 14th Army in Burma at a time when it was defeated, in disarray, and consisting of soldiers from very different nationalities. When he assumed command, the 14th Army's identity was best expressed in its informal name "the Forgotten Army." However, in spite of these tremendous challenges, under General Slim's leadership the 14th Army in Burma eventually became highly successful against the Japanese.<sup>31</sup> Another example is General Matthew Ridgeway taking command of the 8th Army in South Korea in December 1950. Similar to Slim, Ridgeway took over a multinational army that was defeated, fragmented, and possessing poor morale. However, like the 14th Army under Slim, the 8th Army obtained considerable success under Ridgeway's leadership.<sup>32</sup>

While Ridgeway and Slim possessed different personalities, leadership styles, and leader characteristics, one of their first courses of action after taking command was to understand their groups' identity and to begin aggressively reshaping it in a positive way.<sup>33</sup> Both these leaders supported these actions through establishing a vision for their respective groups and creating the organizational structures necessary to translate their army's reshaped identity into reality. They recognized in their men that in spite of their past failures, they innately desired to be successful, to attain victory, and to accomplish the worthwhile, which both leaders effectively tapped in order to form a new identity. Based upon extensive research on social identity and leadership, it is highly unlikely that either of these leaders would have been nearly as successful without this understanding of identity, recognizing the critical need to reshape it, and implementing the necessary actions to translate the reshaped identity into reality.<sup>34</sup>

### **Potential Improvements to the Army's Model of Leadership**

When reflecting on this analysis of relevant empirical information, it presents a number of important opportunities for improvement to the

Army's present model. First, while FM 6-22 identifies several leadership attributes consistent with the research on leadership efficacy, greater emphasis should be placed on certain characteristics that clearly possess a strong empirical relationship to leadership efficacy. The most significant example on this point is the attribute of resiliency. To the Army's credit, it recognized the importance of this leadership characteristic by including it in the most recent version of FM 6-22. However, the manual devoted only four brief paragraphs to this attribute and primarily framed its application around combat. Within the empirical literature on leadership, the characteristic of resiliency or hardiness possesses one of the strongest relationships to leadership efficacy. Further, the data suggests that the positive manifestation of other leadership qualities like intellect is primarily tied to the possession of strong resiliency. Resiliency also contains a much broader application beyond combat in the execution of competent leadership. The majority of leaders in the Army will not directly experience combat; nonetheless, positions of leadership in the Army possess considerable stress demands and responsibility, which require substantive resiliency in order to produce positive and lasting results. The Army leadership model needs a more balanced emphasis on leadership characteristics to reflect this research.

Second, the empirical information suggests that the Army should consider re-conceptualizing its major categories within the leadership model. Presently, FM 6-22 divides 12 leadership attributes into three categories consisting of leader character, presence, and intellectual capacity. While most of the attributes are logically placed within these three categories, the placement of empathy and interpersonal tact in their present categories does not fit conceptually within their respective domains. For example, when considering intellectual capacity, the attributes of mental agility, judgment, innovation, and domain knowledge are conceptually linked; however, interpersonal tact represents a different skill domain from intellectual capacity. Research indicates that interpersonal tact as reflected by emotional intelligence measures a different skill set from intellect.<sup>35</sup> An individual with low intellectual ability is unlikely to demonstrate much mental agility, innovative thinking, and the ability to effectively assess complex situations and formulate sound decisions on limited information (i.e. the attribute of sound judgment). However, the same individual could still potentially possess high interpersonal tact. The same argument could be directed toward the inclusion of empathy under leader presence. Both empathy and interpersonal tact are much more conceptually linked to emotional intelligence. Given the importance of EI within the empirical literature, empathy and interpersonal tact should be placed within a separate domain, which would also provide more appropriate emphasis to their importance in competent leadership.

Finally, the empirical information on leadership suggests that the Army's model should place much greater emphasis on leaders understanding and utilizing social contextual factors. Although FM 6-22 provides some emphasis on the relationship between leaders and followers within leader competencies, the model is ultimately leader centric, suggesting the foundation of competent leadership begins with an individual possessing certain attributes. As indicated in the last section, the research does not support this approach to establishing a model of leadership. A balanced model of leadership clearly needs to incorporate the understanding and application of group identity in order to produce the most effective outcomes for an organization. Undoubtedly, the attributes contained in FM 6-22 are important to effective leadership; however, an effective leader also recognizes, understands, and actively shapes their group's identity consistent with organizational values, norms, and goals. Although FM 6-22 does an excellent job in explicitly communicating leadership standards, it is ultimately negligent in applying appropriate and balanced emphasis on empirically based factors of leadership.

### **Conclusion**

The FM 6-22 provides a valuable and comprehensive model for understanding leadership and the competencies required to be successful as a leader in the Army. However, an analysis of relevant empirical literature suggest that the model needs to change in order to better reflect the factors necessary to developing the most effective leaders. While the model stresses several leadership attributes that are empirically based, this review revealed that the Army's model requires greater emphasis on certain characteristics (e.g. resiliency, EI) that possess the strongest empirical relationship to leadership efficacy. Further, more recent research on leadership psychology stresses the significance of social contextual factors; however, FM 6-22 has not fully incorporated this critical data into the model's conceptual framework. Although the Army's model relies upon valuable information in formulating the basis for competent leadership, this review indicates that the next revision needs to integrate greater empirical data in order to establish the best model for influential, competent leadership.

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## **Managing Risk in Today's Army\***

Major Brendan Gallagher

Of all the characteristics an organizational-level leader must exhibit, one of the most important is the ability to effectively *manage risk*. A three part analysis consisting of first, what recent US Army doctrine has to say about the topic; second, how elements of risk are embedded within virtually every significant leadership decision in the current operating environment; and finally, the implications upon today's Army helps to shed light on this critical leadership issue. Through this approach, one can appreciate how and why the manner in which the Army addresses this topic will carry important repercussions upon the force as a whole.

### **The Doctrinal Context**

Recent Army doctrine addresses the topic of risk in several publications, each of which addresses it from a slightly different perspective. It is worth a brief review of these outlooks to help provide a useful starting point from which to further analyze the subject.

First, Army Doctrine Publication (ADP) 3-0, published in October 2011, provides a conceptual foundation for the Army's recent shift to Unified Land Operations. Within its trim fourteen page length, it also directly addresses risk in the following passage:

The theater of operations often contains more space and people than US forces can directly control. Army leaders make risk mitigation decisions about where and how to employ their forces to achieve a position of relative advantage over the enemy without alienating or endangering noncombatants.<sup>1</sup>

The passage implies that every decision invariably carries an opportunity cost. When a leader decides to employ combat power or influence in a particular way, then that generally means he or she cannot employ those same resources in another potentially deserving location at the same time. Therefore a leader must remain cognizant of the operational variables (PMESII-PT) and the mission variables (METT-TC) in order to understand how the various dynamics interconnect and arrive at a decision.

FM 5-0 (The Operations Process) dated March 2010 addresses risk as well. Specifically, as the manual discusses how to craft an operational approach, it expands upon the link between risk and resources. FM 5-0 stresses that "rarely does one organization directly control all the necessary resources," and therefore a commander must determine "the acceptable

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\* This paper is the second place winner of the General Douglas MacArthur Military Leadership Writing Competition at the Command and General Staff College of Fort Leavenworth, Kansas for class 12-01.

level of risk to seize, retain, or exploit the initiative.”<sup>22</sup> Because resources are inherently finite, their employment will drive significant decisions which can impact which side gains or maintains the initiative. Where to allocate limited ISR collection assets, where and when to focus combat patrols, and where to emplace a combat outpost all exemplify examples of such decisions. In this way, FM 5-0 elaborates upon the connection between the allocation of resources and the assumption of risk.

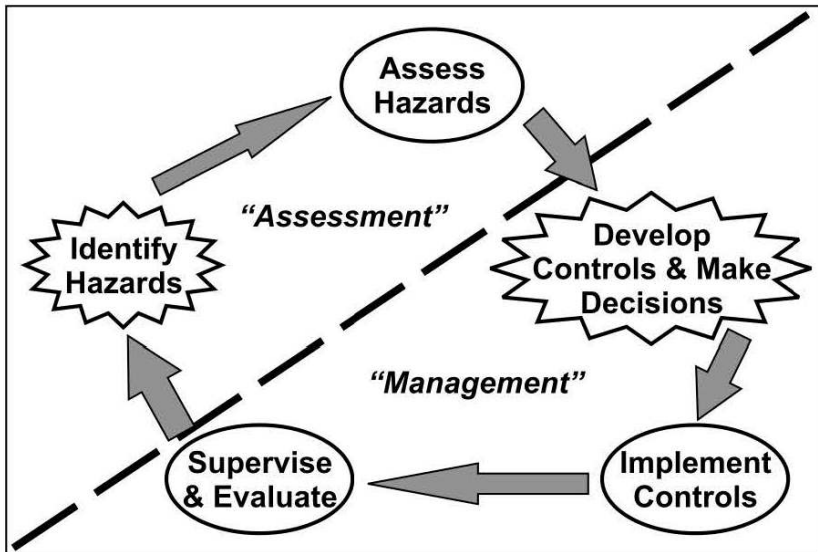
Risk mitigation is addressed from a slightly different angle in FM 3-07 (Stability Operations), published in October 2008. It describes an “interdependent relationship among initiative, opportunity, and risk,” and insists that leaders “accept prudent risk to create opportunities when they lack clear direction.”<sup>23</sup> FM 3-07’s incorporation of *opportunity* helps expand the horizon of the discussion. If a leader finds himself or herself unable or unwilling to assume some degree of risk at critical junctures, it could eliminate the possibility of generating or capitalizing upon such fleeting opportunities.

A recent example of this link between risk and opportunity was the 2007 Awakening in Baghdad, in which groups of former insurgents stepped forward to break away from Al Qaeda in Iraq. US commanders at various levels knowingly assumed some obvious risk by allying with these groups in order to help marginalize or defeat Al Qaeda in Iraq. Although the Iraqi government continues to grapple with the long-term integration of these former insurgents, US commanders on the ground positively embraced this opportunity. This typified a clear example of the often challenging balance between risk and opportunity which FM 3-07 describes.

Finally, a slightly older publication, FM 5-19 (Composite Risk Management) dated August 2006 also addresses the topic of risk throughout its contents. In contrast to the previous publications, much of the focus of FM 5-19 is upon the mechanics of risk management. It lays out a step-by-step process, as depicted in the diagram below. The manual also addresses how to apply this process in conjunction with Troop Leading Procedures (TLPs), the Military Decision Making Process (MDMP), and overall training management. Although FM 5-19 tends to be somewhat formulaic in its approach, it nevertheless provides a concrete sequence for units to refer to during the decision making process.

Collectively, these publications demonstrate the manner in which official Army doctrine has addressed the topic of risk in recent years. The publications help underscore several key points. First, they highlight the finite resource constraints which are an inherent part of combat operations, and how risk is directly tied to them. Second, the publications underline the linkages between risk, initiative, and the exploitation of battlefield opportunities. Furthermore, they provide a deliberate process for units to attempt to follow as they work through such challenges. This doctrinal

foundation helps set the stage for a consideration of how risk mitigation applies to the contemporary operating environment.



The Army's Composite Risk Management (CRM) Process.  
Source FM 5-19 (Composite Risk Management).<sup>4</sup>

## Risk and the Current Operating Environment

One must appreciate the fact that virtually every leadership decision is fraught with risk, since the presence of risk helps comprise the very definition of what a ‘decision’ is. According to the Oxford English Dictionary, a *decision* means “the making up of one’s mind on any point or course of action; a resolution, determination.”<sup>5</sup> The definition implies a tradeoff between different paths—in other words, a leader must choose one action over another by comparing the respective costs and benefits. If one course of action is entirely risk-free in every way, then a decision is probably not required because the correct path is obvious. However leaders today rarely find themselves in such simple circumstances. More frequently there is a tradeoff, and rather than a straightforward choice between good and bad, or black and white, leaders today frequently find themselves operating in murkier shades of gray in which such stark contrasts are not apparent.<sup>6</sup> In such instances, each potential path embodies different degrees of risk in various areas, whether in terms of risk to the overall mission, risk to subordinates’ lives, or other areas. It falls upon the leader’s shoulders to grapple with these competing factors, usually with incomplete information, limited time, and less-than-optimal circumstances.

A hypothetical example helps demonstrate this all-encompassing aspect of risk in practice in the current environment. Suppose a maneuver unit deployed to a combat zone receives credible information regarding a high value target's (HVT) whereabouts later tonight. This particular HVT is a low-level insurgent financier whose transactions facilitate attacks against coalition forces. The unit had previously planned to focus on route reconnaissance operations during that same time period because the unit has endured numerous IED strikes, and aggressive reconnaissance during those hours helps deny key terrain to the enemy. The unit's commander and staff have carefully analyzed the situation and determined that unfortunately they do not have sufficient combat power to conduct both operations. Tonight, they must choose—either conduct a raid of the HVT's location, or focus on counter-IED patrolling. If they choose the raid, they may potentially capture the HVT but at the same time allow IED(s) to be emplaced due to the lack of reconnaissance. They can try to creatively mitigate that risk using ISR and other assets, but ultimately the unit will probably still assume somewhat greater risk from IEDs. Alternatively, a focus on route reconnaissance should help secure the routes which may help save soldiers' lives in the short term, but could also allow the insurgent financier to slip away for good. Either way, embedded within this decision are notable long-term consequences.

To further muddy the waters, suppose the unit also received scattered, unconfirmed reporting of an insurgent attack planned against a friendly combat outpost sometime in the next two weeks. With this additional information, perhaps another course of action would be to forego both the raid *and* the route reconnaissance, and instead use all available combat power to bolster the outpost's defenses. Yet such a decision would heighten the risk in those other two areas—facilitating the financier's possible escape, and allowing the emplacement of additional IEDs.

One can see from this admittedly simplistic example why there is almost never a straightforward risk-free path. The commander and his staff are constantly confronted with many conflicting strands of data and intelligence, and each potential path entails differing degrees of risk. The risks may include the weighing of short-term versus long-term priorities, progress in kinetic versus non-kinetic areas, and countless other tradeoffs. The weight of the decision ultimately rests upon the commander's shoulders, yet the staff is also heavily involved, as the staff should provide him with a recommended course of action, including a method to mitigate the residual risks. Whatever decision the unit arrives at can have life or death consequences, and can directly affect mission accomplishment.

One should further appreciate that at the organizational level, a leader's decisions can generate exceptionally far-reaching effects. Whereas at the direct level of leadership units are generally smaller with impacts more

readily apparent, at the organizational level there are usually many more factors at play, and results may be simultaneously more indirect yet more consequential.<sup>7</sup> An organizational level leaders' job is often more challenging for this reason, because he or she must account for a wider degree of complexity with more protracted ripple effects. This often requires an even more sustained and focused application of judgment, experience, and creativity than is required at the direct level of leadership. All this renders the leader's decisions and the management of risk that much more important.

In the 'hybrid' environment the Army currently confronts, which includes both conventional and insurgent threats on an ever-changing battlefield, this assessment and mitigation of risk can be exceptionally complex. After a suicide blast or IED explosion or some other traumatic event, one may be tempted to look back in hindsight and critique the unit's leadership and ask why they didn't do things differently. Perhaps the easiest question to pose in retrospect is: how come they couldn't see the train coming? But before one travels down that road, one should consider the myriad of other threat streams and competing demands existing at the time of the decision. One must attempt to acquire a true sense of what it was like to stand in the leadership's shoes at the time without the benefit of hindsight, in an environment with few unequivocally "right" answers.

### **Implications and Relevance to Today's Army**

All this carries important implications upon the exercise of leadership in the present-day Army. First, it is worth noting at the outset what will *not* be a useful technique for leaders to adopt in dealing with this challenge: risk aversion. Risk aversion entails an excessive desire to avoid risk at virtually any cost, which can paralyze a unit into inaction or squander key opportunities. In the current environment, this might be represented by units spending most of their time on fortified bases, hunkered down behind layers of thick defenses with minimal interaction. Such a posture relinquishes the initiative to the enemy, and may create a perception that US forces are unwilling or unable to complete their mission.<sup>8</sup> Risk aversion contributes to an excessively cautious approach<sup>9</sup> which overly centralizes decision-making at higher echelons of authority, and tends to stifle individual initiative. Curiously, the only time FM 5-19 (Composite Risk Management) directly addresses the topic of risk aversion is in a single, brief sentence: "Do not be risk averse."<sup>10</sup> The topic of risk aversion deserves further discussion throughout the ranks.

Army leaders at the organizational level and above should appreciate that even successful efforts to mitigate risk in the most prudent and logical ways can still result in occasional losses or outright disaster. Even when all the right precautionary measures are taken, US forces still confront an intelligent, thinking, adaptive enemy, and 'the enemy always gets a vote.'

Since no unit can guard against every threat at every place and time, there will invariably be instances in which the enemy achieves a short-term success via a high profile attack, assassination, or some other action. Such a negative event may be accompanied by unflattering US media coverage, a rise in organizational stress,<sup>11</sup> and an accompanying desire to hold *someone* accountable. Yet a rush to judgment may be profoundly unfair to the unit closest to the event, and also counterproductive to the long-term climate of the Army. A leader's goal is to try to establish conditions so such setbacks occur as rarely as possible, but with the implicit understanding that such setbacks cannot ever be entirely eliminated.

All this is not a recommendation to absolve commanders of accountability for their actions. Leaders unequivocally shoulder the ultimate responsibility for the decisions they make or fail to make, as well as the actions of their subordinate units. Yet there is an enormous gulf between a leader who consistently makes the best decisions possible in an ambiguous, uncertain environment and a leader who is simply negligent, careless, unfit for command, or fosters a poor command climate. There is also a fine line between justly holding leaders accountable for their actions, and scapegoating. The Army would be wise to bear such key distinctions in mind in the years ahead, in order to help foster the best climate possible. This is particularly relevant as the Army seeks to internalize lessons learned from recent high profile events.

This also helps illustrate why an unofficial adoption of a “zero defect” approach—a phrase which gained prevalence in the Army during the 1990s—would be unfortunate. As the Army appears ready to begin a sizeable drawdown of units and personnel, there may be increasing pressure to only promote or retain those individuals with a spotless record, clear of any blemish whatsoever. Some highly qualified officers and NCOs could find their careers cut short due to a singular setback which occurred on their watch. Such an environment—or even the perception of such an environment—could have negative consequences. It could help prod the Army towards a risk averse culture by instilling a perception that leaders cannot afford any mistake whatsoever. Commanders could increasingly choose to “play it safe” during training and combat operations out of a desire to avoid jeopardizing their own careers. The widespread adoption of such a mentality could make it harder for Army leaders in the future to make a major decision containing significant risk. It would have been difficult, perhaps impossible, for Eisenhower to green light an invasion of Normandy, for example, had he been paralyzed by risk aversion or a zero defect climate.

Risk mitigation is not an exact science, and there is no such thing as a riskless decision. The process is an art, and even when performed brilliantly, leaders will still occasionally confront setbacks or even outright

failure. The multitude of decisions an organizational leader is responsible for every day can literally have life or death impacts, either directly or through secondary repercussions. Yet a leader cannot eliminate every risk on the modern battlefield because no human could ever achieve such an endstate. Rather, a leader must intelligently assume risk in deliberate ways, while seeking to mitigate the residual risks in the smartest ways possible. Leaders have no choice but to carefully weigh all the various factors in the context of their own best judgment and experience, and commit to what they believe represents the wisest course of action, despite incomplete and often conflicting information.

True breakthroughs on the battlefield will often arrive through “a willingness to accept risk, and do things differently.”<sup>12</sup> Operation Overlord and Operation Market Garden represented examples of such risk taking during World War II, with strikingly different results. In the future, the Army’s success may not result from absolute perfection, but rather from experimentation, learning from failure, and the implementation of logical measures to manage risk. Such techniques should be encouraged rather than inadvertently constrained, as the Army strives to find the right balance between the instilment of accountability and the encouragement of sensible risk taking. These two areas should not be treated as mutually opposing goals. Overall, the Army should appreciate that how this timely issue is handled will help influence the Army’s trajectory in the years to come.



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## **Control and Fear**

### **Enhancing Soldier Performance and Welfare\***

Major Hugh W. A. Jones

*Anybody who says they're not afraid of war is either a liar or they're crazy.*

—Norman Schwarzkopf

Fear, an emotional response to threat and danger, is a reality of combat. In manageable doses, fear creates focus, clarity, and enhances physical capabilities by triggering the “fight-or-flight” response. However, excessive fear leads to anxiety, an emotional state typically occurring without external threat.<sup>1</sup> At extremes, fear leads to decreased performance through emotional exhaustion, apathy, resignation, and creates an increased likelihood of eventual Posttraumatic Stress Disorder (PTSD).<sup>2</sup> Given the inherently dangerous nature of combat, it is therefore critical for combat leaders to harness fear, managing and mitigating the effects of fear in their organizations. Not only is this in the best interests of the Soldier, but it also enhances unit performance and mission accomplishment. Empirical observation of human behavior in combat<sup>3</sup> and numerous research experiments<sup>4</sup> have proven that the perception of control over one’s environment greatly decreases fear regardless of the actual probabilities and consequences of physical harm. In other words, the belief that one has some control over a situation reduces fear, regardless of the actual danger. The ability to reduce fear through perceived control in combat operations represents a powerful tool for the combat leader, but does not necessarily override tactical and operational considerations.

This article discusses the effects of perceived control on fear, and the application of this relationship to combat leadership and operations. I will also use personal combat experience and observations to discuss this relationship and its potential combat applications.

### **The Effect of Control on Fear**

Bomber pilots in World War II, flying fixed courses through enemy flak, reported experiencing greater fear than fighter pilots despite experiencing a significantly lower casualty rate (23 percent versus 48 percent).<sup>5</sup> A significant difference between bomber pilots and fighter pilots is the level of individual control. The fighter pilots had a greater level of control over their course and aircraft, than the bomber pilots. It is important

\* This paper is the third place winner of the General Douglas MacArthur Military Leadership Writing Competition at the Command and General Staff College of Fort Leavenworth, Kansas for class 12-01.

to note that the bomber pilots were more fearful despite a significantly lower casualty rate, or were more fearful despite less actual danger. This example illustrates that actual danger is less important in creating fear than the individual's perception of control. The clear parallel in contemporary conflict is convoy personnel who drive a fixed route on roads targeted with improvised explosive devices (IEDs).

Experiments corroborate and elaborate on this observation. In an experiment in which a psychologist administered a panic-provoking agent (5.5 percent carbon dioxide) to panic-prone patients, the psychologist told half of the patients that they could reduce the concentration of the agent by turning a dial when a light was illuminated. The experimenter did not provide this option to other half. The group with the dial reported both less fear and a shorter duration of fear, despite the dial being completely inoperative.<sup>6</sup> The inoperative dial is another instance of perceived control reducing fear, despite having no actual effect on the danger. Actual panic agent levels were the same for each group, the only difference was that the group with the dial *thought* they had some control. We can therefore conclude that, to some degree, the level of actual control is not as important as the *perception* of control.

A study of mountaineers further corroborates this conclusion. Like combat, mountaineering is extremely dangerous with some mountains having fatality rates approaching 50 percent.<sup>7</sup> However, mountaineers make extreme sacrifices to pursue this activity voluntarily, despite the danger, much like Soldiers in combat. We see in mountaineers a strong distinction between uncontrollable risks and those risks that they can mitigate by skill or caution. Mountaineers willingly accept those risks they feel they can control, while they disdain those they cannot. "When the risks depend solely on chance, not skill, the mountaineer enjoys them as little as anyone."<sup>8</sup>

From these and other studies, we can conclude that the perception of control significantly reduces fear. Reducing fear to manageable levels increases individual performance, reduces unhealthy anxiety, and reduces the likelihood of eventual PTSD.

### **Implications for Combat Leaders**

Appreciating that the perception of control diminishes fear, there are six key considerations for combat leaders. Holding all else equal, these considerations are: (1) an individual with more control, such as a leader, will tend to experience less fear than a subordinate with less control; (2) regardless of actual control, a leader must endeavor to exude control of a situation in both action and communication; (3) reasonable delegation of control to subordinate leaders will enhance control, and thereby reduce fear; (4) new Soldiers will experience relatively more fear than experienced

Soldiers; (5) incoming leaders in particular must consider and mitigate the influence of control on fear; and, (6) organizations in offensive operations will experience less fear.

### **Leaders Experience Less Fear than Subordinates**

By virtue of their position and authority, leaders have more control over a given situation than their subordinates. Therefore, leaders must appreciate that they will experience less fear than their subordinates. Leaders must remember this consideration when judging the actions of their subordinates and consider the relationship between perceived control and fear for planning and operations. While a leader faces additional stress due to their increased responsibility, in terms of fear, they will experience less. My personal observations over two deployments to combat as an Infantry company commander support this assertion. Despite a significant casualty rate (~20 percent wounded, ~6 percent killed) and approximately one enemy contact every two days, I rarely experienced significant levels of fear. Additionally, I noticed that this pattern held for my subordinates as well, leaders tended to experience less fear than a member of the squad. I do not attribute this to significantly greater levels of courage in leaders than the average, but rather to their increased control. In circumstances in which I did experience greater levels of fear, I typically had less control.

### **Leaders Must Exude Control in Both Actions and Communication.**

If the perception of control reduces fear, then leaders must demonstrate control in both action and communication during dangerous situations, regardless of their actual level of control. This is intuitive although it is frequently violated, particularly by those with little combat experience, and therefore more likely to get overly excited. I know from personal experience that in an intense firefight there is nothing worse than getting the impression that a leader has lost control of himself, or the situation. Conversely, a calming, confident voice over the net seems to sooth the situation regardless of the fact that their communication tone has no material bearing on the gravity of the situation itself and is in fact, arbitrary.

### **Delegation to Subordinates**

If the perception of control reduces fear, then the greater the authority of the leader on the ground, the less fear experienced. The implication is to reduce the number of tactical constraints on subordinate leaders as much as possible, reduce fear by providing the ability, and authority, to control. I.e. avoid constraining authorities for close air support, in-direct fires, maneuver, etc. Again, from personal experience, it is always comforting to know in the back of your mind that you can call on “the big guns,” or take other significant measures, if the situation on the ground becomes untenable.

## **New Soldiers Will Experience Relatively More Fear**

Apart from simple prior combat experience, newly assigned Soldiers will experience more fear than Soldiers who have served in the unit long enough to learn unit standard operating procedures, personalities, culture, etc. A new Soldier will have relatively less control of a given situation than an established Soldier. A new Soldier does not know unit nuances and thereby how to best exert control of the tactical situation as appropriate. Leaders must appreciate this premise in their integration of newly assigned Soldiers; endeavor to create understanding and familiarity.

## **Incoming Leaders Must Consider and Mitigate the Influence of Control on Fear**

When a new leader assumes control of a unit in combat, the leader must appreciate and understand the relationship between control and fear. A new leader will have different expectations, *modus operandi*, etc. These changes will reduce subordinates' perception of control to varying degrees, depending on the new leader's actions. When possible, the new leader should avoid reducing subordinate authority and ease into new *modus operandi*, this will enhance subordinate perception of control and thereby reduce the potential for fear.

## **Organizations in Offensive Operations Will Experience Less Fear**

In addition to individual control, as discussed above, it is also meaningful to consider the control/fear relationship in organizational control of the battlefield and resultant Soldier fear. In other words, in the minds of the Soldiers, who controls the battlefield, friendly or enemy forces? Are we attacking or defending? What demonstrates organizational control of the battlefield? We can deduce that proactive, offensive operations producing results demonstrate greater control of the battlefield. This deduction does not promote ill-conceived, baseless offensive operations for the sake of demonstrating control; this simply says that holding all else equal, an offensive mindset and operational mix will result in the perception of more organizational control of the battlefield and subsequently, less fear. Of course, we must appreciate that reducing fear is not the purpose of combat operations; this discussion simply provides additional considerations for combat leaders to incorporate when appropriate.

We can best examine the importance of an offensive mindset and its effect on the control/fear relationship in a contemporary operational setting. Consider a frequently IED targeted road. Some convoys take the approach of "blowing through" IED strikes. I.e. upon an IED strike, the convoy speeds through the engagement area and continues mission. Disregarding the numerous tactical disadvantages of this approach, consider the mindset of the convoy personnel. They play "Russian roulette" with IEDs every

day, doing little to control the environment or affect the probability of future IED strikes. During the surge my company inherited one of the most heavily IED targeted stretches of road in Iraq. We targeted this threat as proactively as possible. This consisted of counter-IED Small Kill Team ambushes and aggressively targeting IED cells. Additionally, if we suffered an IED strike we would do as much as possible to track down the culprits, starting as soon as possible (within mission constraints). Occasionally this required returning to exploit the site of the strike after mission completion. The process would sometimes involve multiple days of “police work,” but for approximately 50 percent of IED strikes, we eventually arrested or killed those responsible. During our deployment, the number of IED strikes on this road decreased 93 percent. Not only did we actually decrease the threat, but also cognitively, we were exerting control over the environment. I have no doubt that this control reduced fear and assisted us in functioning effectively despite the real and significant threat from IED attack.

From the IED example, we can theorize that proactive, offensive operations producing results create a sense of organizational control of the battlefield. This control of the battlefield will result in less experienced fear for friendly forces, and most likely increased levels of fear in enemy combatants. Therefore, holding all else equal, proactive offensive operations and an offensive mindset are preferable to defensive operations and a defensive mindset in terms of increasing perceived organizational control and decreasing fear.

## **Conclusion**

Through scientific experiments and empirical observations of human behavior, we know that perceived control reduces fear. Reducing fear improves performance and is best for the individual. By the nature of our mission, combat units routinely confront dangerous conditions and consequently experience some level of fear. Through appreciating and applying the mitigating effects of control with respect to fear, combat leaders can significantly reduce fear, improve performance, and improve Soldier welfare.

The control/fear relationship indicates six key considerations for combat leaders. Holding all else equal, these considerations are: (1) an individual with more control, such as a leader, will tend to experience less fear than a subordinate with less control; (2) regardless of actual control, a leader must endeavor to exude control of a situation in both action and communication; (3) reasonable delegation of control to subordinate leaders will enhance control, and thereby reduce fear; (4) new Soldiers will experience relatively more fear than experienced Soldiers; (5) incoming leaders in particular must consider and mitigate the influence of control on fear; and, (6) organizations in offensive operations will experience less fear.

Importantly the control/fear relationship does not necessarily override tactical and operational considerations; rather, the relationship represents another tool for the combat leader to employ as appropriate. Additionally, a perceived lack of control is not the only source of fear; other factors are also important, such as previous combat experience, individual psychological resilience, and other factors.

## Notes

1. A. Ohman, "Fear and Anxiety: Evolutionary, Cognitive, and Clinical Perspectives," in M. Lewis and J.M. Haviland-Jones eds., *Handbook of Emotions* (New York: The Guilford Press, 2000), 573-93.
2. H. Prince, "Individual Stress and Adjustment," in *Leadership in Organizations* (New York: Avery Publishing Group, Inc., 1988), 101-26).
3. Prince., 122.
4. G. Loewenstein, *Because It Is There: The Challenge of Mountaineering . . . for Utility Theory*, in *KYKLOS*, vol. 52, (1999), 315-44. Fase.
5. H. Prince, "Individual Stress and Adjustment," in *Leadership in Organizations* (New York: Avery Publishing Group, Inc., 1988), 101.
6. G. Loewenstein, *Because It Is There: The Challenge of Mountaineering . . . for Utility Theory*, in *KYKLOS*, vol. 52, (1999), 330.
7. Loewenstein, 318.
8. Loewenstein, 330.





## Transformational Stories

### How the Weekend Safety Brief can be a Forum for the Professional Military Ethic\*

Major Joel P. Gleason

*“Now all you recruits, what’s drafted today,  
You shut up your rag-box an’ ‘ark to my lay,  
An’ I’ll sing you a soldier as far as I may:  
A soldier what’s fit for a soldier...”*

-Rudyard Kipling-  
The Young British Soldier<sup>1</sup>

Today’s Army is well on its way to codifying a Professional Military Ethic (PME) that will define our service and ensure that we retain our nation’s trust,<sup>2</sup> but a difficulty remains in translating this high ideal to the individual Soldier for safekeeping. Discussions in the past have often highlighted a need to successfully articulate and decipher the PME from the halls of our learning institutions to the frontline “strategic corporal” in order to have an impact on our organizational success.<sup>3</sup> The implied transformation from citizens into Soldiers into ethical leaders will take place in a multitude of forums from institutional settings to professional mentorship and this article cannot cover them all. Instead, let us turn our focus to one of the most readily adapted rituals we have in our service.

Friday afternoons across the Army, commanders and their senior NCOs face their formations in the perfect setting for a discussion of the PME: the weekend safety brief. Sadly, because of a long-standing practice, the large majority of these opportunities end up wasted as leaders attempt to check the block with unmemorable maxims for Soldiers’ immediate behavior. This usually comes in the form of a list of things Soldiers should do and things Soldiers should avoid. How much more could this custom accomplish if we designed it to focus beyond this simple formality and begin to shift Soldiers closer to a commitment to the Army Values using memorable engagement?

Adopting a model of Transformational Stories from recent business literature will provide leaders with a method that allows them to truly engage Soldiers in discussions about the Professional Military Ethic while

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\* This paper is the first place winner of the General Douglas MacArthur Military Leadership Writing Competition at the Command and General Staff College of Fort Leavenworth, Kansas for class 12-02.

continuing to attack the immediate concerns that the weekend safety brief should address. In lieu of the customary mode for these safety briefings, this article details a better technique for ensuring a lasting impact on our Soldiers. That method is to communicate a vision through memorable stories.

## **Articulating a Professional Military Ethic**

Before we look at how to go about re-tooling the weekend safety brief, it is vital to show that a change will not be adverse to good order and discipline in the short term. To accomplish this reassurance, it is first necessary to determine that there is a genuine imperative to instill in our Soldiers a PME and that the Army Values are an acceptable tool for the job. Second, it is relevant to demonstrate that shifting to an Army Values focus will build stronger Soldiers who are more able to handle the stresses of combat and day-to-day life. Finally, we will show that shifting Soldiers from compliance to Army Values-commitment is a realistic framework for modifying the originally targeted unsafe behavior. In the end, leaders must still affect improved off-duty judgment within their formations.

Consider for a moment an expansion on the definition of leadership from ADRP 6-22. Under the heading of “Improve the Organization,” the publication expounds, “Improving is an act of stewardship, striving to create effective, efficient organizations.”<sup>4</sup> Leaders have a responsibility as stewards of the military service to impart upon their Soldiers the established values of our service. This challenge is not merely a matter of moving Soldiers from compliance to commitment,<sup>5</sup> but of ensuring that they understand the values to which they are committed. Researchers have demonstrated that leaders cannot fully accomplish an improvement of the ethics of subordinates by simply demonstrating ethical leadership. These principles must additionally be actively promoted through an ongoing dialogue in public and private settings.<sup>6</sup>

Likewise, in developing “Soldiers with military competence and moral character,”<sup>7</sup> leaders need to have at their disposal a standard set of principles-in-virtue from which to draw their lessons. The literature on the PME provides a broad set of creedal and philosophical starting points.<sup>8</sup> Although legitimate recommendations for expansion of the Army Values exist,<sup>9</sup> the list represented by the acronym LDRSHIP has a significant value as a starting point for expressing a PME to our Soldiers. The seven values taught to every Soldier at basic training “capture important elements of the Army Ethic<sup>10</sup>” and provide talking points for leaders initially engaging Soldiers’ moral stance.

Engaging Soldiers on ethics goes much further than a simple indoctrination into the profession or behavior modification on and off duty. Changes to Warrior Resiliency Training developed to aid Soldiers in post-traumatic growth indicate “Army Values, Warrior Ethos, and leadership are critical foundations of Army resiliency training that can be skillfully integrated into a model promoting internal combat stress control.<sup>11</sup>” This kind of development indicates that the greater the foundation a Soldier has in moral understanding, the more likely they are to be able to handle combat stress. Likewise, an individual with a stronger moral compass is less likely to engage in behaviors that result in psychologically damaging guilt and regret. Overall, this is an area that deserves more research but leaders cannot dismiss the demonstrated benefits that the Army Values have been as an ingredient in our Warrior Resiliency Training programs.

Of course, no leader should accept a recommendation to change the weekend safety brief to a new form if the originally targeted behavior is not being addressed and corrected. Weekend safety briefs, after all, are implemented to remind Soldiers not to “embarrass the regiment,” as the expression goes. These concerns are not unreasonable but a deeper examination of theories of leadership influence might demonstrate that the goal to develop Soldiers who understand the PME and the goal to keep them off of Monday morning’s blotter report are not mutually exclusive.

In Dr. Gene Klann’s essay “The Application of Power and Influence in Organizational Leadership,<sup>12</sup>” a central theme is the leader’s responsibility to shift subordinates from a point of mere compliance to a point of core commitment. These ideas are usually displayed in diagrams with compliance on the left and commitment on the right so we might say for our discussion that we are “shifting Soldiers to the right on the values spectrum.<sup>13</sup>” The implication of successfully shifting Soldiers to the right is that the foundation of their behavior will move away from requiring “hard power” motivation. Instead, the Soldier committed to their own standing in a profession will be motivated by an “affiliation” with the Army and the organization.

Under a framework in which Soldiers become more interested in their own role as members of the profession, the logical consequence is that the originally targeted immature and negative behavior will become less appealing or relevant. This shift meets leadership expectations of “millennials.<sup>14</sup>” Study has shown, “one of the best ways to keep them [millennials] engaged is to communicate a large vision, worthy of their devotion, and then set high expectations.<sup>15</sup>” Communicating a PME, instead of a series of “rules for your weekend,” casts a vision appealing to millennials.

We have established that the weekend safety brief is a valid forum for discussions about the PME and that shifting to that topic is likely to have a positive impact on the good order and discipline of the organizations that make such a change. What we need now is a better method of delivery to make such a safety briefing stick with the target audience.

## **The New Weekend Safety Brief**

This conversation begins by describing what we have been doing and why that is generally an ineffective method. The next objective is to identify exactly what we want to accomplish through the weekend safety brief. To close, we will examine a new method for making Soldiers more likely to do the right thing. In their 2007 book *Made to Stick: Why Some Ideas Survive and Others Die*, authors Chip and Dan Heath offer a helpful model with which we will be able to improve our organizations.

To be intellectually honest, proving that the current mode of weekend safety brief is a failed method runs into a small challenge since there is no body of literature documenting the topics and formats of weekend safety briefs or any scientific data available with which to measure their effectiveness. That said, most leaders in the Army can turn to their own anecdotal evidence and experience to inform a discussion about the value of current techniques. Essentially, the reader is asked to accept this argument even though a lack of available records places it in the category of a “planning assumption.”

Chip and Dan Heath, in a later book, *Switch: How to Change Things When Change is Hard*, describe a common human situation where the obstacle to change can best be described by the confession, “I know what I should be doing, but I’m not doing it.”<sup>16</sup> The Heaths, two brothers, consider this a problem that deals with conscious motivation but a lack of drive on the emotional side. Our subordinates often know *what* to do and may even believe that they *should* do it. The problem is that they are not motivated enough *to* do it. The weekend safety brief that consists of a list of “do’s & don’ts” speaks only to the part of the human brain that already knows not to drink and drive or commit domestic violence. The problem is that it fails to address the part of the brain that is going to do something about it. In order to motivate Soldiers on that level, we must transform the weekend safety brief into something else entirely.

Today’s target recruit is a fairly well-adjusted member of society between the ages of 17 and 24.<sup>17</sup> The drinking age has been 21 in all 50 States longer than anyone in the target range has been alive.<sup>18</sup> For

the entire lives of this demographic, drinking and driving has also been against the law and it was never legal to skip wearing a seatbelt in any US State.<sup>19</sup> A Friday afternoon reminder of what is illegal in our society is not going to be a surprise to any of our Soldiers. They do not need a weekly reminder of what the rules are, instead leaders need to broaden Soldiers' interest in the problem and involve them in the solution.<sup>20</sup>

Additionally, the topics leaders address in these settings often represent a laundry list of the problems the organization has most recently suffered. Educators will confess they succumb to a similar problem. Frequent education gaps are being revealed as "pressure around state-mandated exams pushes some teachers to 'teach to the test.'<sup>21</sup>" When leaders simply chastise their Soldiers to avoid a set of behaviors that those Soldiers already know they should be avoiding, those leaders are in essence "teaching to the test" and failing to provide any leadership that will result in a lasting improvement in the organization. Transforming the weekend safety brief shifts the topic from a lecture aimed at behaviors Soldiers already know are undesirable to a discussion that motivates them to act in a positive manner on that knowledge.

In order to motivate Soldiers to live by the Army Values, we must renovate our method and change our topic for the weekend safety brief. This brings us to the model of Transformational Stories. The Heath brothers' book, *Made to Stick*, offers a framework for engaging and motivating people in a manner that is more likely to endure. The model they propose is built around the acronym SUCCEs. Their mnemonic for an idea that is "made to stick" describes "a Simple, Unexpected, Concrete, Credible, Emotional Story<sup>22</sup>" which will be more memorable and more readily applied.

Simple, unexpected, concrete, credible, emotional stories; Heath and Heath recommend them for everything from organizational change, to advertising, to going "viral" on the internet. Our purpose here is a narrow slice of organizational change aimed at transforming our Soldiers by shifting them to the right on the values spectrum. In order to communicate all of these concepts more expediently, we will use the name "Transformational Stories." These Transformational Stories designed to specifically engage our Soldiers and shift their values, will both educate the formation in what it means to live the Army Values as well as cover the need to make junior Soldiers think about personal responsibility in their off-duty environment.

"Simple" stories work with human memory because our Soldiers are more likely to pay attention to the things they understand. Focus

groups organized to develop children's programming have discovered that, despite common assumptions, children stop listening when they stop understanding. Kids tune in, even to *boring* portions of educational television, when they understand the message.<sup>23</sup> This is not to say that our Soldiers are children but rather that keeping our messages understandable, even as we delve into the PME, is critical to ensuring that Soldiers remain engaged in the discussion.

The next principle from Heath and Heath is "Unexpected" because a degree of surprise captures the attention of the audience. The Heath brothers further illustrate that an identified gap in knowledge causes the human brain to retain interest long after the discussion ends.<sup>24</sup> This is why the teaser keeps some people from flipping the channel during television commercials. This does not mean that every Transformational Story has to contain a twist or a shocker but when it is possible to add an element of surprise, leaders will do a better job of engaging subordinates.

"Concreteness" has long been a proven method for clarifying ideas to the audience. In this regard, we should seek out visual aids and hands-on demonstrations of the PME. The idea of an object lesson in a sermon is incredibly popular for this same "made to stick" reason. A Google search for the phrase "object lesson" or "concrete example" will yield hundreds of results.<sup>25</sup>

The topic of PME does not automatically make a weekend safety brief "Credible." Bear in mind that defining exactly what "Professional Military Ethic" means is an ongoing discussion across the Army. Credibility in the realms of ethics and morality may be one of our greater challenges in the current environment of ethical diversity.<sup>26</sup> Additionally, the speaker's credibility in both personal and professional life affects the message. The Army Values, because of their pervasive acceptance, make the best platform for a credible discussion of PME, while the credibility of the speaker is a much larger topic best left for another leadership article.

Continuing with the SUCCES mnemonic, "Emotions" are a key link to memory and lasting behavioral change.<sup>27</sup> (If emotional displays in front of a formation do not sound like your strong point, bear in mind that stoicism and the warrior ethos are also displays of emotion.<sup>28</sup>) A main point the Heath brothers convey in both of their books is that there is a strong connection between emotions and a willingness to act.<sup>29</sup> Additionally the chemical and physiological connection between emotion and memory is fairly well established.<sup>30</sup> Accessing the endorphin-memory link may be as easy as holding your brief immediately following an esprit-de-corps unit run.

Simple, Unexpected, Concrete, Credible, Emotional, and finally, “Stories”; we were born to remember a narrative<sup>31</sup> but humans must work to remember a list. Professional competitive “memory champions” actually convert anything they want to remember (even random lists of numbers or decks of playing cards) into a “memory palace,” a kind of story, in order to remember so many inane details.<sup>32</sup> When we hear a well told narrative, there is a part of our brain that walks through the story with the teller and that aids understanding and retention.<sup>33</sup>

It is through this last point; through the telling of stories, that we are making the major success-driving change in our weekend safety brief format. The story and the object lesson become our starting point for engaging subordinates in a common vision of the Army Values.

## **Telling Transformational Stories**

Going back to the beginning of this article, imagine a new Friday. The unit finishes a motivational morning run and while Soldiers’ hearts are still pumping hard the commander calls them all into an informal “horseshoe” formation. He tells them he is not going to insult their intelligence by lecturing them to do the right thing over the weekend. They already know what the right thing is and he expects them to do it.

Instead, he wants to talk to them about respect. (It is Simple because they already have a foundation for what respect is. Discussing respect is also Credible because it is an Army Value.) He tells them about his neighbor who is a blind man with a service dog. (That is Unexpected and, because the Soldiers realize there is a gap in their knowledge, their natural curiosity is piqued.) “The other day I saw him leave home to go for a walk and when he got about 100 meters from his house there was a car parked across the sidewalk in someone’s driveway.” He is drawing them in to the challenge his neighbor is about to face. “The dog stopped him short of the car but, having no idea why, my neighbor tried to keep the dog moving. The dog stopped him three times and he ended up yelling at the poor dog before running into the car himself.<sup>34</sup>”

Soldiers might be wondering where this is going, but none of them have tuned out. The commander continues, “I think there’s a lesson about respect we can learn from what happened to my neighbor.” He goes on to make a connection between the lack of trust the blind man had for his service dog when something unexpected happened and a young Soldier who disregards the advice of a wise friend or an NCO.



“I want you to imagine your friend is trying to steer you clear from a bad decision this weekend. What are you going to do? Are you going to do the right thing or are you going to walk smack-dab into a parked car?” He has placed them inside the narrative now and he starts to shift them toward commitment. “If you think respect is simply giving your NCOs what’s due, you are just beginning to uncover the Army Values...”

This commander has successfully initiated a dialogue through a Transformational Story. When he finishes the discussion after a few more points about respect, he has not told them not to drink and drive because they already know not to. He has reminded them, on a very personal level, that their off-duty behavior is part of who they are and he has high expectations of that behavior.<sup>35</sup>

Every Soldier will not walk away from that formation instantly transformed and completely committed to the Army Values but they will walk away shifted a little bit more to the right on the spectrum from compliance to commitment. Soldiers who are engaged through a SUCCES-based series of Transformational Stories may still occasionally hit the blotter report but, despite that, leaders will instill in their Soldiers something the old-style weekend safety brief does not: the emotionally based personal drive to act. Those Soldiers will be more likely to become committed to the Professional Military Ethic sooner in their careers than others will.

The simplest thing about this concept is that leaders who have themselves shifted from compliance to commitment to the PME carry with them the stories that brought them to that point. Without seeking for a cleverly contrived anecdote or object lesson, most leaders are capable of relaying to Soldiers what it means to be a practitioner of the Army Values from their own experience and the experiences of those around them. Additionally, leaders who choose to adopt this method will find themselves approached by Soldiers who are in the process of shifting to the right with their own stories to tell.

Changing the weekend safety brief into a weekly forum to discuss the Professional Military Ethic will build the organization we have been seeking through the previous format by targeting the root cause of a need to shift Soldiers from compliance to commitment. Redesigning the format of what is said from the notorious list of “do’s and don’ts” into Transformational Stories will improve the organization because leaders will be using researched methods to ensure that these ideas stick with our Soldiers once they get past the parking lot.

*In order to illustrate the points in the article above the following two examples are provided.*

### Comparing Apples to Oranges: an Object Lesson in Integrity

“We often hear the phrase, “you’re comparing apples to oranges,” as if it cannot be done, but have you ever tried it? On the outside, apples and oranges are both baseball-sized round fruit. Apples are smooth and shiny while oranges are bumpy. However, cut them open and they are very different. The apple is consistent while the orange is segmented into several pieces. Looking further, we discover that the apple has a core while each orange segment is focused on one or two seeds.

Do you find that your life is segmented or is it consistent? Do you do the right thing all day while you are in uniform but put on a different personality when you are at home? Do you act right at work and then act out when you are at the club? You might be segmented like the orange. In this analogy, we would be more professional in our lives if we were consistent.

The Army Value Integrity is about more than just honesty. It is about being consistent between our professional selves and our personal selves. The word integrity comes from the same root word as the word “integer,” the word for a whole number. So if we think about it, integrity has something to do with your whole life, being a whole person. Changing your behavior depending on your setting might be an indicator of poor integrity.

The main difference between the apple and the orange is that the apple has a core to focus on so it is consistent, while the orange has several separate seeds. We have a core, we have the Army Values to provide a point of focus and make us more consistent like the apple.<sup>36</sup>

### Freedom’s Flag: Loyalty and the Emotions of a Patriot

Transformational Stories do not have to be incredibly complicated, or even always “stories” in the strictest sense. One of the quietest weekends I ever had while commanding in Korea was after reading this poem to the formation.

*IT'S THE SOLDIER*

*It's the soldier, not the reporter*

*who has given us freedom of the press.*

*It's the soldier, not the poet,*

*who has given us freedom of speech.*

*It's the soldier, not the campus organizer,*

*who has given us the freedom to demonstrate.*

*It's the soldier, not the lawyer,*

*who has given us the right to a fair trial.*

*It's the soldier who salutes the flag, serves under the flag and*

*whose coffin is draped by the flag,*

*who gives the protestor the right to burn the flag.<sup>37</sup>*

After reading this poem I pulled my American flag from the right shoulder of my ACUs and held it aloft to the formation. I said, "This is an inspectable item this weekend. Stick it in your pocket before you go out and every time you are about to do something questionable, look at that flag and ponder whether someone died so you could be free to do that." My first sergeant followed up with a brief discussion about loyalty and everyone left with something memorable.

## Notes

1. Kipling, Rudyard, "The Young British Soldier," in *Barrack-Room Ballad*, Kindle e-Reader Edition, (N.P.: Public Domain: Amazon Digital Services, 2011), Location 314 of 908. This nineteenth century 13-stanza poem, laced with historical reference, depicting the advice of an veteran NCO to new recruits is a reflection on an early form of the safety brief.
2. *Army Doctrine Publication (ADP) 6-22: Army Leadership*, (Washington, D.C.: Office of the Secretary of the Army, August 2012) page 6.
6. *Army Doctrine Reference Publication (ADRP) 6-22: Army Leadership*, (Washington, D.C.: Office of the Secretary of the Army, August 2012) pages 3-1, 7-15. Also see Dempsey, Martin E., *An Army White Paper: The Profession of Arms*, (Washington, D.C.: Training and Doctrine Command, December 2010).
3. Imiola, Brian, and Danny Cazier, "On the Road to Articulating Our Professional Ethic," *Military Review, Special Edition: Center for the Army Profession and Ethic*, (September 2010), page 14.
4. *ADRP 6-22, Army Leadership*, page 1-2.
5. Klann, Gene. "The Application of Power and Influence in Organizational Leadership." In *L100 Book of Readings: Developing Organizations and Leaders*, by CGSC Department of Leadership, 61-72, (Fort Leavenworth, Kansas: US Army Command and General Staff College, 2011), page 61.
6. Barnes, Christopher M., and Joe Doty, "What Does Contemporary Science Say About Ethical Leadership" *Military Review, Special Edition: Center for the Army Profession and Ethic*, (September 2010), pages 90-91.
7. Case, Chris, Bob Underwood, and Sean T. Hannah, "Owning Our Army Ethic," *Military Review, Special Edition: Center for the Army Profession and Ethic*, (September 2010), page 9.
8. A recommended starting point for the interested leader would be this publication. *Military Review* regularly publishes quality articles addressing the realm of leadership including a 2010 Special Edition on the Center for the Army Profession and Ethic, which includes many of the sources for this article.
9. Fromm, Peter D., "Warriors, the Army Ethos, and the Sacred Trust of Soldiers," *Military Review, Special Edition: Center for the Army Profession and Ethic*, (September 2010), page 23. This article represents one of many authors considering changes to the Army Values and the Warrior Ethos. In addition to asking some thought provoking questions, this article contains several historical examples that could be used to design a more engaging weekend safety brief. See also: Imiola and Cazier, page 15.
10. Case, Underwood and Hannah, page 4.

11. Jarrett, Thomas, "Warrior Resilience Training in Operation Iraqi Freedom: Combining Rational Emotive Behavior Therapy, Resiliency, and Positive Psychology," *The Army Medical Department Journal*, (July-September 2008), page 37.
12. Klann, pages 61-72. See also ADRP 6-22, chapter 6.
13. I must credit this phrase to my former commander and mentor in leadership, COL (P) Bernie B. Banks. The word "right" is not intended to have any sort of political connotation.
14. "Millenials" is a generational name identifying our current pool of junior Soldiers used by popular media.
15. Rainer III, Sam S. "Next Generation Needs: Leading Millennials Requires Exercising a Different Type of Authority." *Leadership Journal*, (Summer 2011), page 49.
16. Heath, Chip, and Dan Heath, *Switch: How to Change Things When Change is Hard*, (New York: Broadway Books, 2010), page 263.
17. US Army Recruiting Command. "US Army Recruiting Command January 2012 Talking Points." *US Army Recruiting Command*. (January 31, 2012. <http://www.usarec.army.mil/support/downloads/January%202012%20talking%20points.pdf>) (accessed September 6, 2012), page 1.
18. The, Associated Press. "Last Call in Wyoming as State Gives in, Raises Drinking Age." *Orange County Register*, Jul 01, 1988. 11, (<http://search.proquest.com/docview/272245554?accountid=28992>) (accessed September 9, 2012).
19. For a more robust list of facts that have "always" or "never" been during your subordinates' lives it is worth occasionally perusing the Beloit College Mindset List. Beloit College publishes a list annually to help their professors understand the incoming freshmen class. Beloit College, *The Mindset List*, <http://www.beloit.edu/mindset/> (accessed September 6, 2012).
20. Heath and Heath, *Switch*, page 123.
21. Bonem, Mike. "Measuring What Matters." *Leadership Journal* Spring (2012), page 72.
22. Heath and Heath, *Made to Stick*, pages 16-18. Readers, if this article has caught your interest, please seek out and read this interestingly written and well-researched book on how to design ideas to speak to the human mind.
23. Gladwell, Malcolm, *The Tipping Point: How Little Things Can Make a Big Difference*, (Boston: Little, Brown and Company, 2000), page 102.
24. Heath and Heath, *Made to Stick*, pages 89-93.
25. *Made to Stick* has a similarly accessible set of examples.

26. Pojman, Louis P., and James Fieser, *Ethics: Discovering Right and Wrong*, 7th Edition Kindle e-Reader Edition, (Boston: Wadsworth, 2012), location 5379 of 6078.

27. Heath and Heath, *Switch*, page 105.

28. Jarrett, pages 34-35. Also see the Fromm article in MR referenced in note9 to expand the reader's understanding of the nuance bound within many of the emotional and creedal charters we indicate here.

29. Heath and Heath, *Made to Stick*, pages 173 & 203. See also ----, *Switch*, pages 101-123.

30. Roediger, III, Henry L., Elizabeth Deutsch Capaldi, Scott G. Paris, Janet Polivy, and C. Peter Herman, *Psychology*, Fourth Edition, (Minneapolis/St. Paul: West Publishign Company, 1996), page 283.

31. "Story" could easily be replaced with "Narrative" since the point is less "once upon a time," and more to draw the listener in to the message.

32. Foer, Joshua, *Moonwalking With Einstein: The Art and Science of Remembering Everything*, (New York: The Penguin Press, 2001), pages 9-10.

33. Heath and Heath, *Made to Stick*, pages209-210.

34. Modified from: Sande, Ken, "The blind ignoring the guide," *Leadership Journal*, (Summer 2011), page 59.

35. The reader may have noticed some of the principles of SUCCEs in this story about a commander and her organization. It was simple, concrete, and perhaps even unexpected. It may not be possible to hit all six points in every Transformational Story but each one adds a layer of "stickiness."

36. Although I have been using this object lesson in front of formations so long I have made it my own, I recall first hearing it at Flamingo Road Church in Cooper City, Florida around 2005 and will place the credit there.

37. Province, Charles Michael, *Freedom's Flag*, found on the North East Kansas Korean War Memorial in Topeka, Kansas. This poem is often misattributed to Father Dennis Edward O'Brien due to a newspaper misprint.



## **Lessons in Leadership**

### **Simple and Uncomplicated\***

Lieutenant Commander Edward J. Pledger, US Navy

As the father of a toddler, I have recently discovered the awesome task of teaching him some valuable life lessons. Share. Be nice. Treat others with respect. It occurred to me that many of these lessons seem to be forgotten by many military leaders.

In my twelve years of commissioned service, I have spent hours upon hours learning about leadership. From classroom study to lectures to reading anything I can get my hands on, my quest to unlock the secrets of leadership have known no bounds but I realized the simple lessons I am teaching my son – the same lessons my parents taught me when I was growing up - translate directly to my experience as the commanding officer of a ship.

I have come up with a list of simple, yet effective, lessons for any leader. These lessons may seem dull and a simple, but I have attempted to illustrate each with my own command leadership experiences and explain why they are relevant.

Be nice. Say thank you. Share. Tell the truth.

You have heard all of these. No one will dispute they are all important life lessons. They are also crucial lessons you must master if you are to be an effective leader.

### **Be Nice**

Nice guys finish last. So the saying goes. Plenty of people subscribe to this saying, and in the process ignore a very powerful leadership tool. Colin Powell, in his book “It Worked for Me” notes that kindness is a sign of confidence.<sup>1</sup> Showing kindness, displaying a cheerful disposition and being pleasant are ways you can enhance your authority and strengthen your organization.

Being nice can lead to the commitment of followers. Commitment is preferred over compliance because committed followers have personal ownership in the organization and are devoted to mission accomplishment.

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\* This paper is the second place winner of the General Douglas MacArthur Military Leadership Writing Competition at the Command and General Staff College of Fort Leavenworth, Kansas for class 12-02.



Followers who merely comply with directives and orders may influence short term behavior but is not effective for long term or steady results. Leaders can gain commitment through the use of referent power. Referent power, a subset of personal power, is “the power generated by relationships” and “has the highest potential of all the forms of power to gain strong commitment from followers.”<sup>2</sup> As a leader, the challenge is identifying what tactics can be used to apply referent power.

Showing kindness, or simply being nice, is an easy and effective way to apply referent power and achieve commitment from your followers. This falls into the category of “soft tactics” which are “associated with personal power” and is “effective at gaining follower commitment.” One soft power technique is relationship building, where “leaders build positive rapport and a relationship of mutual trust...”<sup>3</sup> Showing kindness to your subordinates can lead to a strong senior-subordinate relationship where the junior feels valued and committed to the organization.

While being a “nice guy” has merits, this is not always what the troops want or need. “You want somebody who can take charge and get the job done even if he is a little rough sometimes. You are going to favor that guy over somebody who wants to hold your hand and pat you on the back all the time. Troops know the difference.”<sup>4</sup> There will be times when you need to be forceful, raise your voice and ruffle some feathers but use these techniques judiciously. As they may lead to short term accomplishments, they will not necessarily inspire long term commitment.

Being nice may not come naturally for many leaders, but it is very simple. Smile. Shake people’s hands. Walk around and talk to people. Ask them about their life outside of work. Be an active listener and give people your full attention.

While in command, I went to great lengths to be nice. By using kindness as an influence tactic, I sought my crew’s trust and commitment. I made it a point to regularly walk around the ship and engage Sailors in friendly conversation. I adhered to the leadership tenant of praise in public, reprimand in private. I wanted my crew to enjoy coming to work and work in a friendly environment where they were respected. I knew that we could achieve a positive climate only if I, the Commanding Officer, set the right tone.

## **Say Thank You**

Rewards in the military are commonplace. They are given for everything from valor in combat, high achievement during a tour of duty,

or exceptional marks during an inspection. Rewards are recognition for a job well done. The military reward system ranges from the formal: medals and certificates; to the informal: a well deserved day off from the Commanding Officer or a pat on the back accompanied by a “Good job.” A reward, regardless of the level and formality, is a way the leader says “Thank you.” Saying thank you, in whatever way you deem necessary, can have a tremendous effect on your unit’s morale. The opposite is true if you neglect to show appreciation.

Morale is an issue of concern for a leader because it is the intangible element that bonds a unit together and will keep it fighting in difficult situations. In the words of Gen. William T. Sherman, “...no general can accomplish the full work of his army unless he commands the soul of his men...”<sup>5</sup> High morale has a direct effect on a unit’s performance and combat readiness. There are many jobs in the military that have the potential to erode morale and have a negative effect on unit readiness. Taking out the trash, cleaning the galley, toilets and showers. These are not jobs recruiters advertise, but every junior Sailor has done them. These are far from the glamorous jobs seen on T.V. ads and billboards and definitely not why people join the military. Even though the filthy and thankless jobs must be done, they can wreck the morale of a Sailor and thus affect the morale of the unit. The challenge for the leader is to recognize what can drive spirits down and how to mitigate low morale.

Rewards can build and enhance morale within the unit. A leader has reward power, a subset of positional power and can be an effective way to change and influence behavior in an organization.<sup>6</sup> When in a position of leadership, you have the power to reward your followers which “can be highly motivational.”<sup>7</sup> In addition to being a source of power, rewarding is a type of influence technique that can be used to effectively change behavior. Leaders control certain resources valued by the unit. As the leader, you have the ability to give these resources out in a way to recognize and reward certain behaviors.<sup>8</sup> By rewarding the behaviors you want to see and punishing the behaviors you do not want to see, you will eventually see a shift to the desired behaviors.

My crew worked hard and took a lot of pride in their efforts. I took every opportunity I could to say thank you and recognize their work. I wanted to continue the positive momentum of working hard, and I also wanted to build a culture within the ship where we valued industriousness. I also looked for ways to recognize Sailors who did the little things right, did their job at a consistently high level, or came to work with a positive attitude every day. I saw the behaviors that would make our culture positive and one of excellence and I rewarded those actions.

With the assistance of our Supply Officer, we created the Impact Award. The Impact Award was given by me to Sailors who did anything noteworthy. Sailors could be nominated by their chain of command or by anyone in a leadership position. I, as the Commanding Officer decided whether or not to present the award. The award consisted of a small pin in the shape of a mine that could be worn on a ship's ballcap as well as a 24 hour liberty pass. Once I decided the recipients were deserving of recognition, I wasted no time in making the award presentation. The award "ceremony" was short and informal; it was immediately followed by my telling the crew over the ship's announcing system of the award, the recipient and why the Sailor's actions were significant.

Impact Awards were awarded for everything from emergent equipment repairs to maintaining a clean and neat work area. I wanted Sailors to know I appreciated their efforts. If we were to do the little things right and be excellent in everything we did, I knew I had to reward the behavior that would lead to excellence. I also knew the crew highly valued time off. By rewarding them with what they wanted and saying thank you in a public way, I was able to cultivate the types of performance that would lead to a successful command.

## **Share**

Every leader knows teamwork is an essential component to an organization's success. At the heart of teamwork is the concept of sharing. When individuals are willing to give of themselves, to share what they have with their teammates, teamwork and cohesion ensue. The mark of a well led organization is one where helping teammates is the norm. When the team can function as one, it is greater than the talents or abilities of any single individual.

Teamwork can allow a team to overcome even the most challenging circumstances. Invariably, in the course of your leadership experience, you will realize you and your team have more requirements than resources. You won't have enough time, money, parts or manpower. You will always be able to use extra help. However, it isn't just you who can use the help; it may be one of your subordinate units that need a helping hand or even one of your peers. Everyone can use assistance from their teammates. In the military, no matter what the echelon, we are part of a team. Anyone in the military can look around and find teammates who are capable of helping overcome an obstacle and reach the objective. The challenge for the leader is to build a culture where resources are shared in your organization and everyone works toward a common goal.

The leader's job is to build a "team orientation." This is done by creating experiences where team coherence is refined and enhanced.<sup>9</sup> In psychologist Bruce Tuckman's Group Development Model, the storming phase is where the foundation for teamwork is laid. It is also where potential exists to block effective team building. In this stage, there is potential for rivalry within the group where individuals resist the push for cooperation. The leader must employ processes that promote cooperation among teammates. A cooperative environment is characterized, among other things by "a readiness to be helpful."<sup>10</sup> An organization where colleagues are willing to sacrifice and share their resources will lead to mutual trust, commitment and eventually pride.<sup>11</sup> The leader must determine what processes to use that will result in a culture of helping, sharing and unity of effort.

Creating a culture of sharing and teamwork is a difficult task for any leader, but as Coach Mike Krzyzewski notes, "People, generally, want to be on a team...want to be part of something bigger than themselves...want to be in a situation where they feel that they are doing something for the greater good."<sup>12</sup> You will have followers who want to help their teammates and share whatever it takes to get team wins. This is exactly what I experienced while in command.

Going into my command tour, I knew there were deep divisions within all Navy ships, mainly between departments and divisions. Also, rivalries between ships, which are generally healthy and spirited in nature, can get ugly and have negative consequences on a maritime fighting force. I looked for ways my crew could build cohesion through sharing its means, eventually establishing a culture where we worked as one, not a group of individuals. Internally, I knew there would be things that could employ the entire crew as one team. Cleanliness is not only a requirement onboard a ship, but it is a great way to build team unity. Washing the exterior of the ship while underway was always an all-hands evolution. Even though only a few divisions were responsible for the day-to-day cleanliness of the ship's exterior, a thorough scrubbing is very manpower intensive. We would assign every division an area to clean, sharing the workload among the entire crew, not just a fraction of the divisions. The same method was employed when preparing the engineering spaces for inspections. Extremely dirty due to the numerous pipes, liquids and operating equipment, these spaces required a lot of manpower for the requisite deep cleaning prior to an inspection. When we received high marks for space cleanliness, the entire crew could take pride in the achievement.

Likewise, I did not want my crew thinking they were above helping out our fellow ships in the squadron. While there was rivalry and competition between all ships in the squadron, I did not want that competition to devolve into an unwillingness to share our resources with our squadron-mates. When the request came, I made it a priority to support our sister ships in any way we could. We provided parts, manpower, technical expertise and anything else that would lead to the other ship's success. Our crew's tongue-in-cheek mantra became, "Hi, I'm from Crew EXULTANT and I'm here to help!" A sense of pride began to develop as we shared what we had with other ships. Our confidence climbed and we developed a reputation as a crew that was a team player and could be counted on. This attitude fed the mindset that teamwork was how we did business.

## **Tell the Truth**

If you don't have trust in a relationship, that relationship is ineffective. As a leader, your life is defined by relationships. You have a relationship with your organization, your peers, your leadership team and your boss. The absence of trust in each of those relationships results in disunity.

When you are the leader, telling the truth is important because it forms the foundation for an ethical command climate. Additionally, it allows you to set and maintain a standard within your organization. Honesty in your words and actions are paramount if you are to have a well functioning team.

Trust is the basis upon which everything in your organization is built as trust is "essential to teamwork and mission accomplishment."<sup>13</sup> Building trust amongst your followers can lead to an ethical culture and effective command climate. On a higher level, cultivating and establishing an ethical culture "strengthens the social trustee bond between the Nation and the military."<sup>14</sup> Leaders have a critical role in forming an ethical climate. Leaders who demonstrate ethical behavior by being honest and telling the truth will positively impact followers.<sup>15</sup> For an organization to be one of high morals and ethical standards, the leader must be the cornerstone of ethical behavior.

Another aspect of telling the truth is the effect it has on standards within an organization. To walk past a mistake is condone that action (or inaction). "Tolerance of little mistakes and oversights creates an environment that will tolerate bigger and ultimately catastrophic mistakes."<sup>16</sup> If the leader is not enforcing the standards, then those at lower echelons cannot be counted on to enforce standards. A culture of honest reporting and adherence to

standards may be damaging to egos, but it can translate to teamwork, cohesion and discipline.<sup>17</sup>

While in command, I knew my crew was listening to everything I said, no matter how insignificant I thought my comments were. At any point, if I were to go against what I had said earlier, I knew I would be whittling away at any trust I had worked hard to build. Sailors are not dumb. They know when you are being honest and forthcoming with them. If you are not being honest, they will know it. Whether discussing the ship's schedule or the results of an inspection, I was always honest with my crew. And when I said I would do something, I did it. That way, there was never any doubt as to whether or not I could be trusted. My crew also knew what the standard was and what I expected from them. I endeavored to provide honest feedback in my counseling sessions and performance evaluations. If I was walking around the ship and saw a mistake, I made sure not only it was corrected, but I told the chain of command about the mistake. My honesty allowed me to foster an environment of trust and teamwork and no matter how unpopular my decisions, my crew trusted that I was making the best decisions.

These lessons are direct and simple. They are so simple, in fact, every toddler learns these lessons. The challenge lies in implementing these lessons when you are in a position of leadership. Over the past several years, Navy Commanding Officers have been relieved more for a lack of ethical or professional behavior than tactical or technical competence.<sup>18</sup> Clearly, following these modest rules is not only essential but to ignore them is to jeopardize your position and your organization. Leadership is a difficult business with incredible stressors and pressures; adhering to these easy to understand leadership tenants requires meaningful effort. If you are able to master these rules, however, you will find yourself with leading a motivated and dedicated organization poised for success.

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## **Counter-Balancing the Imbalance**

### **An Army Leader's Role in Balancing Organizational Temperament\***

Chaplain (Major) Doug Ball

#### **Refuting Irrefutable Logic**

Consider the following illustration of a normal encounter between an Army leader and a subordinate. A CSM (or any other leader or rank) sees the need one day in Afghanistan to correct a Soldier with a minor uniform discrepancy (once again, any minor issue would do). This Soldier has the panache to place his sunglasses on his head as he walks into the DFAC. The next day, the Soldier moves the sunglasses down to hang around his neck, utilizing the lanyard provided by the Army when issuing the eye protection, only to be told that is unacceptable as well. Days three and four involve hooking the sunglasses on the shirt collar and the reflective belt, violations that earn the Soldier more reprimands.

The Soldier, tired of getting in trouble, asks the CSM why it is so important to follow minor uniform regulations. The CSM answers with the universally accepted Army mantra: "If you lose discipline regarding the little things, you'll lose discipline on the big things, and you'll get someone killed." Irrefutable Army logic... *that is completely nonsensical to 62% of the population!* To understand this, let's evaluate the CSM's statement through the lenses of the four Keirsesey-Bates temperaments, based on the Myers-Briggs Type Indicator (MBTI).<sup>1</sup>

*The SJ (Sensing-Judging):* Like many senior leaders in the military, the CSM is most likely an SJ. SJs love organization, structure, and institutions. They are the largest temperament group at roughly 38% of the US population. They live procedures, rules, regulations and traditions. To them, the CSM's logic makes sense – all rules are meant to be followed and bending minor rules is a sign of failing discipline.

*The SP (Sensing-Perceiving):* The SP is imminently practical and lives in the present. At 35% of the population, they are hands-on, creative, easily bored, and fun-loving. The SP sees no connection between the little rule about the sunglasses and a future hypothetical situation about some other rule. To him, the CSM's sudden sunglass fixation is arbitrary and

\* This paper is the third place winner of the General Douglas MacArthur Military Leadership Writing Competition at the Command and General Staff College of Fort Leavenworth, Kansas for class 12-02.



obviously meant to take the fun out of life. The SP may even purposefully break the rule in the future, just to see the veins pop out on the CSM's forehead. Tomorrow he'll either lose the sunglasses since he can't hang them around his neck, or build a sunglasses holder out of duct tape and attach it to his pistol holster.

*The NT (iNtuitive-Thinking):* NTs represent 12% of the population. They seek competence above all and strive to understand the big picture. NT's learn by asking 'why', questioning authority and challenging the system. The CSM's logic has a reverse effect on the NT. If the CSM thinks that uniform regulations are somehow in the same ballpark as muzzle awareness with a loaded weapon, then the CSM's priorities are out of whack and he is incompetent. It is the duty of the NT to not follow incompetence, so he will henceforth ignore the CSM to include future valid rules and/or input.<sup>2</sup> An NT can be completely disciplined regarding rules he considers important and at the same time ignore those that he does not.

*The NF (iNtuitive-Feeling):* NFs are all about people and relationships. They take criticism and correction personally, and want to live in peace and harmony with everyone. Rules matter to the NF if they affect people and relationships. The NF will be frustrated that the CSM is adding to the stress of deployment by yelling at him. Plus, doesn't the CSM know that he is going through some tough stuff at home? The CSM should be getting to know Soldiers personally and supporting them, not acting like the uniform police. The NF will usually personally follow the rules – but will do so to please the CSM. People are important, not rules, so the CSM's logic is meaningless to the NF.

To three of the four temperaments then, the CSM's irrefutable Army logic is invalid. For a large percentage of the population his statement is meaningless, or even worse, detrimental. Why point this out? Certainly not because there is anything wrong with CSMs, or uniform regulations, or even SJs, but this familiar Army mantra illustrates the effect of temperament and personality type on leadership. Leaders must be aware of the interaction between their own temperament and the temperaments of their subordinates. They must understand that imposing their own personality type on the work environment may be unhelpful or even hostile to other temperaments. Furthermore, when an organization (like the Army) naturally takes on a collective temperament, leaders must be even more aware of how that affects members of the organization who don't match the corporate temperament. As seen below, this is necessary not just for the good of the individual subordinates, but for the good of the organization as a whole.

## **Imbalance Leads to Greater Imbalance**

The Army is naturally an imbalanced organization in terms of collective temperament. One could make an educated and fairly accurate guess as to the group type of the Army by looking at the short descriptions of the temperaments above. The SJ temperament jumps out immediately; people who love organization, structure, and institutions and live procedures, rules, regulations and traditions naturally gravitate to the military. People of this temperament want to belong to meaningful organizations, they are dutiful and dependable, and they enjoy the clearly-defined lifestyle. It is no wonder that a temperament nicknamed ‘The Guardian’ would seek out and excel in the military.

It is not necessary to just guess as to the group type of the Army since research and experience provide support for this thesis. Although the Army does not use or track MBTI across the board, a variety of studies show that SJs are overrepresented in the military. A War College survey of 1755 officers in 1997 identified roughly 62% of them as SJs – much higher than the national average of 38%.<sup>3</sup> The same imbalance was also identified in large surveys in the late 1980’s and early 1990’s and a 2009 paper states that over 50% of War College students are even more narrowly defined STJs (which would only be 20% of the national population).<sup>4</sup> A study at the Naval Academy shows a 60% SJ population<sup>5</sup> and a smaller CGSC study shows an SJ preference over 50%.<sup>6</sup> Although too small to be statistically reliable, current group types in staff groups 2A and 2B reflect this trend, as did the author’s Career Course. Otto Krueger, one of the main proponents of the MBTI who has worked with the Army, points at the military as a career choice of SJs, especially ISTJs.<sup>7</sup> One could also factor in the impact of the NTJs in these studies, another 12-20% of the military population, and realize that not only is the Army leaning toward the SJ temperament, it is leaning away from the F and P types.

The fact that the Army naturally attracts SJs is neither good nor bad, it just is. Most career fields show a group type imbalance, as people self select occupations in line with their personalities and interests. However, both War College studies cited above conclude that the Army furthers the SJ imbalance through systemic processes such as promotion and retention. The Army would need to do long term studies that tracked personnel from initial entry through separation to know the specific extent of this effect, but it is once again a natural and obvious result in any organization with a strong group type.

The opening illustration of this essay involved a minor and insignificant incident, but analogous incidents happen to every member of the Army almost every day. It is all too easy to imagine (and experientially and anecdotally verify) the effect of SJ imbalance on the other personality types. The NT soldier gets frustrated with the seeming incompetence of his superiors and the constraining environment of authority and either leaves the Army or becomes an officer or Special Forces soldier. The SP soldier gets frustrated trying to keep up with all the rules and either finds a technical MOS where she can ‘just do stuff’ or gets out of the Army (and then regrets that spur of the moment decision and seeks to get back in a few years later). The NF soldier gets frustrated with the fact that rules and plans seem to be more important than people, and either moves into a service MOS like the medical corps or leaves the Army.

Even in the officer corps, this process works out through separations, promotions, and branch choices. It is quite easy to look at the correlation between branch and temperament in staff groups 2A and 2B, and realize that most non-SJ personality types have gravitated toward functional areas and non-movement and maneuver branches. Just as the War College studies show, the SJ imbalance in the Army leads to greater SJ imbalance in the Army.

## **Balance Brings Greater Balance**

While many in the Army may dismiss this imbalance as a natural occurrence, or even view it as good, most research on temperament and type diversity in group settings indicate that imbalance is detrimental. In the well known *Challenger* scenario, over 80% of NASA senior leaders were Js and the typological imbalance proved to be a factor in the disaster. Staying on schedule and sticking to decisions are important to Js, and these bents were part of the reason later data that may have prevented the disaster was overlooked.<sup>8</sup>

Because of the SJ leaning of the Army, researchers like Charles Allen question whether the Army is a learning organization that can be creative and think outside the box. According to him, the typical SJ sees himself as an efficient problem solver, but not a creative problem solver.<sup>9</sup> Survey results in Military Review show that only 31% of junior officers believe that the Army values innovation.<sup>10</sup> The Army has struggled in the past decade to adjust to the ‘softer’, more relational aspects of COIN and winning hearts and minds. With creativity more normally associated with SPs (nicknamed ‘Artisans’) and NTPs (most highly represented among entrepreneurs), and relational skills most clearly linked to NF (the least represented in the Army), are these concerns at all surprising?

Diversity of temperament is especially important in problem solving and planning forums. According to a variety of studies,<sup>11</sup> diverse groups “perform significantly better and more consistently than similar groups” and “group synergy was far greater for the diverse groups.” This comes at a price though – homogenous groups worked more quickly, even though diverse groups produced significantly higher quality solutions, especially on ambiguous, complex tasks. As well, diverse groups had a lower quality of presentation even though their solutions were superior. An SJ organization that values efficiency and quality presentation (PowerPoint!) may be willing to sacrifice innovative better solutions for efficient solutions packaged well.

Despite that tendency, balance and diversity would benefit the Army in the long run. In a strategic environment that calls for hybrid warriors that can fight a conventional army, rebuild a sewer system, provide logistics for natural disaster response, and build relationships with local villagers all in the same week, diversity of skill and temperament is necessary. In an era of austerity, innovation and creativity are a must. During a time of stress and high Army PTSD, mental health, and suicide rates, relational skills are in constant demand. A well balanced Army would retain and attract a better balance of temperaments, and with that balance of temperaments would come a wider range of skills and abilities.

## **Leaders Provide Counterbalance**

This is where the Army leader comes in. The only way to correct imbalance is to provide counterbalance. The Army leader must intentionally identify detrimental imbalance and purposefully attempt to counterbalance it. Leaders must be aware of their own temperaments and preferences and seek the input and perspective of other temperaments in order to avoid alienating and disenfranchising differing types of people. This is especially true of SJ leaders in the Army, because they fit nicely into the Army system and may be unaware of the discomfort and frustration experienced in the Army by the other three temperaments.

Practically speaking, what does this look like? How do leaders provide counterbalance in an organization that naturally attracts and retains certain personality types? The following suggestions will assist the Army leader to avoid misapplications of counterbalance, understand how to provide balance through individual leadership, and envision institutional changes that could address systemic imbalance. These suggestions are purposefully broad, recognizing that there are no simplistic answers and that there is a need for more thought and research. They are largely tailored to SJ leaders, but are easily transferrable to leaders of every temperament.

## **What Leaders Do Not Need To Do**

1. Fundamentally and completely correct the imbalance of the Army. By nature, SJs will be attracted to and loyal to this great organization and the Army needs SJs – with apologies to the NCO Corps, it is really SJs that are the backbone of the Army. The Army must continue to be about duty, respect and standards (SJ characteristics) and will always need people who can provide detailed planning and organization (natural SJ abilities).

2. Stereotype SJs as non-creative people lacking relationship skills. The beauty of the MBTI is that it speaks to preferences, not to abilities. There are many SJs in the Army who have strong relational skills, display phenomenal creativity and understand the big picture. However, these things may not be their ‘default’ setting, and will more naturally come to the other three temperaments, especially in times of crisis.

3. Use temperament or type selection for recruiting or building teams. Leaders must not use MBTI as a discriminator or screening criteria for selecting, promoting, recruiting or building teams. Since MBTI measures preference and not ability, promotion and selection should continue to be about performance and potential, not personality.

## **What Leaders Must Do**

1. Know their subordinates and actively seek input from other temperaments. Give the NT permission to bring the group out of the weeds and back to the big picture during MDMP. Turn to the NF at the end of a training meeting and ask him how the training schedule will affect the Soldiers. Hand an SP a practical problem that requires a creative solution and ask her to bring you three ‘outside the box’ ideas.

2. Decide what is most important, and stick to it even when uncomfortable. If the best solution to a problem is the goal, accept the messiness that comes from a diverse group problem-solving session. Is it more important to have everything beautifully laid out in the correct 26 pt. font, or is it acceptable to spend formatting time on developing a better solution?

3. Adapt your personality to give other temperaments some latitude and accommodation, because that is what the SJ Army asks

of them. When the NF Soldier takes criticism from an SJ personally, the Army expects him to get thicker skin. However, when an NT officer questions her SJ commander and the commander gets upset, no one tells the SJ leader to get thicker skin. Both are cases of natural temperamental tendencies. SJ leaders need to realize that the SP Soldier in the motor pool doesn't roll his sleeves up because he lacks discipline and wants to tick off the CSM; he does it because it's comfortable and practical and keeps his sleeves clean. They need to realize that when an NT subordinate disagrees with them, she is not disrespecting their position or authority; she naturally asks the question why and values competence over rank. SJ leaders need to realize that NFs are not soft or emotional; they just have a different logic system – one built around the value of people and relational connections.

## **What The Army Should Do**

1. Realize that loosening up doesn't always mean becoming undisciplined. The Army retains many rules and traditions based on reasons that are now overcome by events. Some of these rules and regulations are illogical (not allowing Soldiers to use a sunglass restraining strap that the Army paid for and issued) or even detrimental to Soldiers (sun exposure and skin cancer because the boonie cap is not authorized in garrison). If someone suggested that the Army loosen haircut grooming standards, allow civilian backpacks to be utilized, and discontinue installation decals on cars, many leaders would decry the changing Army's loss of discipline and professionalism. However, these are all logical steps taken by the British Army for force protection reasons, so that Soldiers are less easily identified when off base and off duty!

2. Overhaul the MDMP process. The MDMP model is a largely SJ model.<sup>12</sup> It moves from part to whole (S), follows a fairly lock-step process with little room for creativity (J), and is too often focused on well-presented briefings and products. As one SAMS monograph succinctly puts it "less than two-thirds of the officers who use this process trust it, and only one in four believe that it consistently produces the best solution to a given problem. In short, we are using a process that we do not really believe in to produce results that we think are sub-optimal."<sup>13</sup> Recent emphasis on Design has been a breath of fresh air for big picture NTs, but the Army will need to further refine the relationship between Design and MDMP and will need to ensure

that Design is not co-opted to become another rigid and highly defined process like MDMP.

3. Institute long term longitudinal studies of the relationship between temperament, career satisfaction, promotion and attrition. Unfortunately, the data needed to fully validate or invalidate the thrust of this paper is not readily accessible (if it exists). The multiple SAMS/MMAS monographs referenced had access to only single-class voluntary survey samples. No source mentioned any NCO or enlisted demographics. Studies at the USAWC take the temperament imbalance in the Army most seriously, but focus on the narrow scope of senior leadership. Overall, these works have addressed the issue of an SJ (and/or TJ) imbalance in the Army from a leadership and problem-solving perspective, but no comprehensive initiative addresses the detrimental impact on the organization as a whole, especially in regards to retention, promotion and attrition.

In conclusion, three truths should be clear. First, the Army is an imbalanced organization, leaning heavily toward the Sensing-Judging temperament with a strong Thinking emphasis. Second, because diversity and balance are good for an organization and for problem-solving, this imbalance has potentially detrimental side effects. Finally, Army leaders can and should provide a counter-balance by intentionally addressing this issue through individual efforts and systemic initiatives.

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## Notes

1. Keirsey-Bates temperament information for the next four paragraphs comes from Kroeger and Thuesen, *Type Talk*, 49-61.
2. For purposes of full disclosure, the author is an NT. All MBTI types are equal, but ENTPs are the most equal.
3. Walck, *Integrating Staff Elements, Personality Type and Groupthink*, 16.
4. Allen, *Creative Thinking for Individuals and Teams*, 3.
5. Roush and Atwater, *Using the MBTI to Understand Transformational Leadership and Self-Perception Accuracy*, 34.
6. Russel, *Relationship Between Army Officer Personality Type, Combat Identifier, Leadership Style, And Career Satisfaction*, 42.
7. Kroeger and Thuesen, *Type Talk*, 194.
8. Kroeger and Thuesen, *Type Talk*, 99.
9. Allen, *Creative Thinking for Individuals and Teams*, 6.
10. Bruhl, *Gardener-Leaders*, 43.
11. Studies cited in Myers et al., *MBTI Manual*, 351.
12. See Danikowski, *Personality and the Planning Process*, for a more in-depth study of how temperament interacts with and influences the planning process.
13. Walck, *Integrating Staff Elements, Personality Type and Groupthink*, 31.





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